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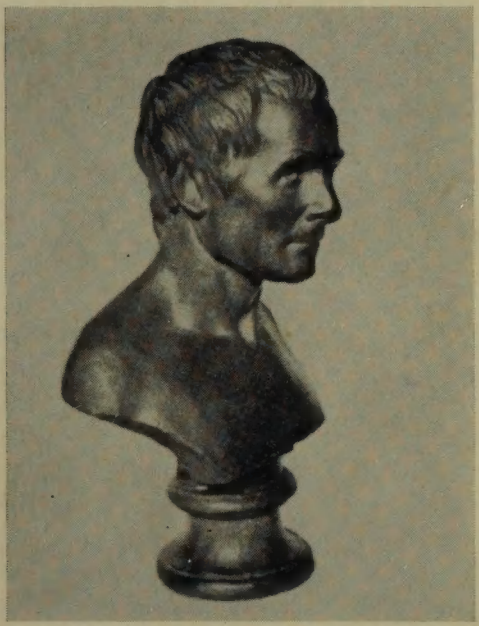
The Minor Educational Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau



Selected and Translated by
William Boyd

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PREFACE

Like most great Western philosophers, Rousseau is known too much through one or two principal works. When he is consulted for his views on pedagogy, for example, it is almost always through the *Émile*. Now there is merit in this, of course—*Émile* is, after all, one of the half-dozen most influential books on education ever written—but there is difficulty as well. For as Professor Boyd rightly contends, both the Rousseauans and their critics have traditionally misunderstood the *Émile,* largely because they have read it apart from Rousseau's other pedagogical writings, notably the lengthy commentaries on familial education in *The New Héloïse* (1761) and on civic education in the *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1773). The present volume is an effort to remedy the difficulty by making available these and other selections that have long been difficult or impossible to obtain in English. It is frankly designed to complement the edition of *Émile* which precedes it in the Classics in Education Series, though Professor Boyd is quite correct in contending that the minor writings have worth and validity all their own.

Those who wish a thorough comprehension of Rousseau's educational ideas will also find *The Social Contract* (1762) indispensable, even though it does not treat education explicitly. Additional references to the literature on Rousseau are included in the Bibliographic Note on page 106.

LAWRENCE A. CREMIN

The Minor Educational Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau

Selected and Translated by
William Boyd

CLASSICS IN
EDUCATION
No. 11

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Introduction

by William Boyd

The educational opinions of Rousseau are known by the great majority of readers only from the *Emile,* and generally only in abridged translation.

The result is unfortunate. The *Emile* is undoubtedly Rousseau's masterwork, and the masterwork of modern education. Not to know the *Emile* is not to know Rousseau or the New Education of which he was the pioneer. But the *Emile,* with what Lord Morley has suggestively called its seminal ideas, is not an easy book to understand; and as a matter of fact most people misunderstand it. They read it out of its context in the social life to which it had first reference and in detachment from the whole system of ideas to which it was related, and in consequence they form quite wrong notions about what Rousseau really meant by it. Finding the greater part of it occupied with the story of the education of a boy by a tutor of unique gifts who had devoted twenty-five years of his life to the task, they take for granted that education under some such conditions is an essential feature of Rousseau's system. On this reading of the *Emile,* the ideal upbringing for a child is individual education by the tutorial method, requiring for its success as complete separation as possible from all the ordinary social ties of family, neighbourhood, and state. If this idea be rejected as impracticable, if not fantastic, all that is left is a collection of maxims on education, more or less remote from ordinary practice.

For this misunderstanding the *Emile* itself is partly responsible. When a writer elects to illustrate his views by putting them in the concrete form of a particular

instance, the presumption is that the instance is perfectly typical so far as it goes: and even if Rousseau did not mean to indicate by his tale that an education like that which the boy Emile got was the *only* kind of education worthy to be regarded as natural—as he did not—he certainly gave the impression that the method of the *Emile* was a practicable method of natural education. This was the view taken by those disciples whose zeal led them to attempt a literal imitation of the tale in face of the obvious practical difficulties; and the *Memoir on the Education of the Prince of Wirtemberg's Daughter* shows that at times Rousseau took the same view himself.

The fact is that when he wrote the *Emile,* Rousseau had no thought of the imaginary situation he created for purposes of exposition being taken as a model for practical life. He had certain ideas about education that he wished to set forth, and he chose the romantic form because it gave him the opportunity to make an effective presentation of his ideas in the first person. In point of fact, the romantic setting he gave his principles was inconsistent with them, as he himself was vaguely aware; but until the literal interpretation of his readers put more stress on the romance than Rousseau had intended, the inconsistency had seemed to him of small moment. And though at first he was carried away by the common opinion and was inclined to accept this literal interpretation, any doubt he may have had on the matter was not long-lived. "You remark very truly that it is impossible to make an Emile", he writes to a friend two years after the *Emile* was published; "but you surely do not think that that was my object."

Apart from any other considerations, a careful reading of the prolegomena in the opening sections of the First Book of the *Emile* is sufficient to demonstrate the error of the commonly accepted view. These show unmistakably: (1) that though Rousseau says that the educator must choose between making a man or a citizen and himself chooses to make a man, he is well aware that the final end of all education must be to give preparation for effective membership of a community; (2) that so far

from thinking of the method of individual tuition, which is consequent on his choice of proximate end in the *Emile,* as the only natural method of education, he is prepared to accept a system of national education like that given in the Platonic Republic as in accord with nature; (3) that even in the modern nation, in which a public education would not be natural, tutorial instruction such as that imparted to Emile is inferior to the education that a child receives in a well-regulated family where the mother is the nurse and the father is the teacher.

It would not be difficult, indeed, to find occasional passages that support the literal view; but taken as a whole, the *Emile* is quite consistent with the general principles enunciated in the First Book.

If any doubt remains after perusing the *Emile* itself, it is dispelled by reading it in connection with his other writings on education. These, indeed, provide the best possible commentary on its principles. Just because they were generally more or less casual in their origin, they put us in more direct contact with Rousseau's real point of view than a formal work like the *Emile,* in which the combination of treatise and romance makes it difficult to distinguish between the substance and the accident.

The admirable Letter on Education in the *New Heloïse,* for example, which was written at the same time as the *Emile* and has a few paragraphs in common with it, is simply an expansion of those sections at the beginning of the First Book of the *Emile* which have been referred to as giving Rousseau's fundamental ideas. Instead of the artificial education under the auspices of a tutor who displaces the parents and takes his pupil away to a remote country village to escape the contamination of ordinary society, we have in this Letter the representation of an ideal education under the conditions of family life. The family, indeed, is not an ordinary one. Rousseau had none of the faith that made Pestalozzi see in the ignorant mother a potential teacher. He postulates for an ideal education the family at its best, with a philosophical father and a cultured mother,

keen to do their duty as masters and as parents. But withal, the ideal never rises above the possibility of being realized. The tutor in the *Emile* was on Rousseau's own hypothesis an altogether extraordinary being, and Emile's education an exception to all ordinary methods. The education described in the *New Heloïse* is possible wherever the father and mother rule over a simple law-abiding household, and make it their business to provide a fit environment for the normal and healthy growth from childhood to mature age which is the true education of nature.

In the article on *Political Economy,* and in the tractate on Polish Government, again, we have in outline the national view of education, which is put aside in the *Emile,* not because Rousseau is averse to national education, but because he thinks there is no place for it in the great overgrown nations of the modern world. The *Emile* is avowedly not a complete statement of Rousseau's views on education. In its pages, the problems of education are all discussed on the supposition that *as things are* it is impossible to make the boy both a Man and a Citizen, and that consequently it is best to make individualized manhood the prime aim of the practical teacher. But this does not close the door on the wider ideal of an education that would make for both individual perfection and civic devotion in a natural society; and when it seemed to Rousseau that the reconstituted Poland might rise superior to the defects of other nations, he was not slow to seize the opportunity to develop a scheme for a national education that would also be natural. That, as he states in the more theoretical discussion of *Political Economy,* presupposes a nation in which a man is more truly man for being a citizen: in a nation such as this the education that is best for the individual is the education that leads him to subject his will to the General Will, and to find his own life in the greater life of the community. The influence of Plato is evident in these writings. After reading them, it is easier to appreciate the claim that Rousseau makes in the Letter in the *New Heloïse* to be a disciple of Plato.

But it is not only with regard to the general point of view that the minor writings help to the understanding of the *Emile*. The student of the *Emile* who goes through them with care will get enlightenment on a great many matters, and most of all perhaps on Rousseau's personality. If, for example, he reads the *Project for the Education of M. de Sainte-Marie* and the *Memoir* on the education of the Prince of Wirtemberg's daughter, he will understand better Rousseau's insistence, in the First and Second Books, on the need for one supreme authority to unify all the conditions of the child's life. These writings, again, and others besides, will provide him with some interesting examples of the elaborate preparation of dramatic situations, characteristic of Emile's tutor, which a French critic has aptly termed "coups de théâtre pédagogiques". Whether, like him and other critics, he will condemn these as educationally unsound after he has seen them to be a kind of overflow of Rousseau's dramatic imagination is another question.

It would be a great mistake, however, to think of the minor writings as merely accessory to the *Emile*. Most of them are well worth reading for their own sake. The two sketches of a national education, for example, may be regarded as educational appendices of the *Social Contract,* and read in connection with it rather than with the *Emile*. The *Memoir* prepared for the father of his two pupils, again, which was his first writing on the subject of education, is an important document in the history of education. The ideas are in most respects very different from those of the later writings. By a certain crudity that appears both in content and expression they give evidence of an unformed mind. But therein lies their value. Not only do they show Rousseau's educational doctrine taking shape, but they show the very important transition from the view of Locke to the new view of education that has passed through Rousseau into the common thought of the nineteenth century. Further, the Letter on Education in the *New Heloïse* contains some of Rousseau's best work on educational theory, and would have taken a high place in the literature of peda-

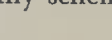
gogy even if the *Emile* had never been written. It deals with the same period of life as the first two books of the *Emile,* but it approaches the subject from quite a different point of view, and on the whole its treatment is superior. The most notable sections in it are those dealing with the place of individuality in education. These form a valuable addition to the casual remarks on the subject which occur here and there in the *Emile,* and repay careful study.

Taking the minor writings as a whole, then, we have a very interesting introduction to Rousseau's educational doctrine. With the important exception of the bearing of age on the scope and method of education—which is the supremely valuable feature of the discussion of education in the *Emile*—there is scarcely a single one of the more outstanding of Rousseau's views on education that is not to be found in them; and the student who approaches the study of Rousseau through them will not fail to get a truer idea of his philosophy of life and education than if he had ventured headlong into the *Emile* itself.

Rousseau's Boyhood: Extracts from *The Confessions,* Books I and II.

[Rousseau was one of the most personal of thinkers and drew largely from his own experiences in all his writings. As one of his biographers has said, he spent the second part of his life writing about the first part. That certainly applies to his views on education. If he had gone to an ordinary school, as he might have done in Geneva, it is unlikely that he would ever have written the *Emile.* That pioneer work owes a great deal to his own unusual childhood. Most of what he learned in the first eleven years of his life was picked up casually in the course of his home life and his play. He became a ready reader by reading romances and histories with his father round about the age of six, and with this came a precocious power of understanding and expression as they discussed what they read. A year or two later he had two years of direct instruction in "Latin and all the useless stuff that goes with it under the name of education," and even that was under tuition and not in a class with other boys. Then followed a time of adult neglect, when he and a cousin occupied themselves in making all sorts of things, including comedies and sermons. Most people would say that he had been badly educated, but that was not his own opinion. "If ever a child had a sound and reasonable education," he said at a later time, "it was I." He was critical of some of the things which befell him, especially the waste of time just before he was apprenticed, and most of all of the stupid rigours of his apprenticeship. But by and large it was a free and easy kind of upbringing like his own that the boy Emile got in the educa-

tional tale that bears his name. What Rousseau specially stressed for education in boyhood was what he called negative education; better, he suggested, to waste time at this stage than misspend it on studies for which the boy is not ready. The main task of the educator should be to protect the pupil from a premature acquaintance with vice and error rather than the inculcation of goodness and truth of the adult sort. That meant that in childhood instruction should be limited to what could be acquired through personal experience—by the imitation of his elders in morals and religion, by the skills and knowledge that came in the activities and interests of play. The learning of history, geography and the languages was excluded as mere verbalism, to be postponed till adolescence brought the capacity for understanding. The one outstanding difference in the education of the boy Emile as compared with the boy Rousseau was the careful ordering of all the circumstances of life by a responsible tutor. The everyday happenings of home and neighbourhood were an important factor in education, but if such mischances as had brought unhappiness to Rousseau himself and done permanent damage to his character (as he thought) were to be avoided there was need of competent purposeful direction. That is the function of the good teacher in any scheme of education.]



*The First Six Years (1712-1719)**

I was born in Geneva in 1712, the son of Isaac Rousseau and Susanne Bernard, both of them citizens of the town. My father was almost entirely dependent for his livelihood on his work as a watchmaker, in which indeed he was highly skilled. My mother, the daughter of a minister, was better off, and, thanks to the care her father had taken with her education, was highly gifted.

* In order to preserve the continuity of this essay, Professor Boyd has chosen to omit ellipses. *L.A.C.*

She drew, she sang, she played on the lute, she was well read and could compose quite good verses. Because of the difference in their station my father had some difficulty in getting her for his wife. But her brother Gabriel fell in love with one of my father's sisters and she refused to marry him unless my mother could marry my father at the same time. At length love found a way and the two marriages took place on the same day. Within a year both pairs had a child, one of them my only brother. Then the two husbands went off to work in foreign lands: my uncle as an engineer to Hungary in the service of the Empire, my father to become watchmaker to the Sultan's harem in Constantinople.

Some five years later my mother, feeling her need of my father, besought him to return. He gave up his job and came back to Geneva. Ten months later I was born, at the cost of her life. My birth was the first of my misfortunes. I was a weak sickly child, not expected to live. But one of my father's sisters, a kindly sensible woman, took such good care of me that I came round all right but for a troublesome ailment of the bladder which grew worse with the years. Both she and my nurse are still alive, and it is possible that the hands that first opened my eyes may close them when I die.

My father never got over his loss. I reminded him of my mother and he could never forget that it was my birth that was the cause of her death. When he embraced me a bitter regret mingled with his caresses and made them more tender. He would say to me: Jean Jacques, let us talk about your mother. All right, Father, I would reply, but you know that we will cry. And that would bring the tears to his eyes. Ah, he would say, you must console me for her and make up for the blank she has left in my heart. Would I love you so dearly if you were not more than a son to me?

Feeling always came before thought with me. That is the common lot of mankind, but it is specially true of me. I know nothing whatever of what I did up to the age of five or six. I do not even know how I learned to read. I only remember the first books I read and the effect they had on me. My consciousness of myself goes back

to this time without a break. My mother had left some romances and my father and I set ourselves to read them together after supper. To begin with, this was only meant to give me practice in reading, but before long our interest in these entertaining stories became so keen that we went on reading them without a stop, turn about. We spent whole nights in this occupation and could never leave off till we reached the end of the volume. Sometimes when my father heard the swallows twittering in the early morning he would say with shame: Time we were off to bed. I am more of a child than you are.

It was not long before I acquired by this risky method not only an exceptional facility in reading and expressing myself but a knowledge of the passions quite unique for one of my age. As yet I had no idea of the facts but I was already familiar with the sentiments involved. These confused emotions that came to me one after another did not affect my reason—it did not yet exist—but created in me a special cast of mind and gave me fantastic notions of human life which neither experience nor reflection have been able to eradicate.

From Seven to Eleven (1719-1723)

We finished the romances by the summer of 1719 and made a new beginning when winter came. Having exhausted my mother's own collection of books we got on to that part of her father's library that had fallen to us. Fortunately it included some good books: Le Suer's *History of the Church and the Empire,* Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History,* Plutarch's *Lives,* Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* La Bruyère, Fontenelle's *Worlds* and his *Dialogues of the Dead,* as well as some volumes of Molière. These books were transferred to my father's workshop and there I read them to him every day while he went on with his work. In this way I acquired a taste uncommon, I might even say unique, for my age.

Plutarch became my favourite reading. I read him again and again, and the pleasure I found in him helped to cure me a little of my devotion to the romances. I soon preferred Agesilaus, Brutus and Aristides to the

romantic heroes. This fascinating reading and the discussions to which it led developed in me the proud indomitable character and the intolerance of subordination which have brought me trouble throughout my life. My thoughts were constantly occupied with Rome and Athens. I might almost say that I lived with their great men. Born myself the citizen of a republic, the son of a man who was a passionate patriot, I thought of myself as a Greek or a Roman and identified myself with the person about whom I was reading. As I read of his fearless deeds my eyes would flash and my voice ring forth. One day at table when I was telling the story of Scaevola I gave the others a fright by holding my hand on a hot chafing dish in imitation of his brave deed.[1]

I had a brother, seven years older than myself, who was learning my father's trade. The excessive affection lavished on me caused him to be rather neglected, which I thought was very wrong. In consequence his education suffered. He was not very old when he fell into dissolute ways and even his transfer to a new master brought no improvement in his behaviour. I did not see a great deal of him and never really came to know him. But I continued to love him and he loved me as much as a young rascal could. I remember one time when my father was giving him a severe thrashing I flung myself impetuously between them and received the blows meant for him, and my father let him go. In the end he became so bad that he ran away and nothing more was heard of him. So I became an only son.

If this poor lad's education suffered from neglect it was very different with his brother. A king's son could not have been better looked after than I was in my early years. Everybody idolized me, but without spoiling me. I was not allowed to run about in the streets like other children. No one ever needed either to check or to indulge me in those capricious moods which are commonly

[1] "Plutarch was the first reading of my childhood and will be the last of my old age. He is almost the only author from whom I have continued to draw some fruitful thought at every reading" (*Les Reveries du Promeneur solitaire: Quatrième Promenade*). "My master and comforter," he called him on another occasion.

attributed to nature but are entirely due to a bad upbringing. I had the faults of my age. I was a chatterbox. I was greedy, and at times I told lies and stole sweets. But I never took pleasure in being bad or in causing damage or in putting the blame on others or in tormenting poor creatures. I remember one occasion however when I made water in the saucepan of a neighbour woman when she was at church: she was the worst grumbler I have ever known. I confess that the recollection of it still makes me laugh. This is a full and truthful account of all my childish misdeeds.

With examples of kindness always before my eyes and the best people in the world about me—my father, my aunt, my nurse, my kinsfolk, our friends and neighbours —how could I possibly have turned out wicked? They did not do everything I wanted them to do, but they loved me and I loved them. My desires were so little excited and so little thwarted that I was never conscious of having any. I can swear that till I came under the domination of a master I never knew what it was to have a whim. Apart from the time I spent in my father's company, or when I was out for a walk with my nurse, I was always with my aunt. I was perfectly content to be beside her to watch her embroidering or hear her sing. I am convinced that it is to her I owe my passion for music though it was not fully developed in me till long after. She knew a prodigious number of airs and songs which she sang with a sweet thin voice. The serenity of this splendid woman drove away sadness and melancholy both from herself and every one who had to do with her. Her songs have remained in my memory and have come back to me freshly as I grow older. I find myself at times weeping like a child as I hum her little airs in a voice that is now broken and tremulous.

Such were the affections of my early life. Through them there began to be formed in me—or to show itself in me—the heart both tender and spirited, the character at once feminine and sturdy, alternating between weakness and courage, between indulgence and virtue, which has set me in contradiction with myself all through my life.

The progress of my education was interrupted by an accident, the consequences of which have affected me to this day. My father was accused of drawing his sword on a French captain within the city and to avoid arrest he decided to leave Geneva and live abroad. I stayed behind in the care of my uncle Bernard. He had a son of my own age, and the two of us were sent to Bossey to board with a minister called Lambercier, to learn Latin and all the useless stuff that goes with it under the name of education.

The two years I spent in the village toned down my Roman austerity somewhat and brought me back to a more childlike way of life. In Geneva where I had been under no compulsion to learn I loved to apply myself to my books. That was all I had to entertain me. In Bossey the work I had to do led me to love the games that served for relaxation. The country was so new for me that I could never enjoy it enough and the taste I acquired for it has remained with me. The memory of the happy times I then enjoyed has given me a longing for country life which has lasted up to the present. M. Lambercier was a very reasonable man. He did not neglect our lessons but he never made too great demands on us. The fact that in spite of my intolerance of restraint I have never recalled the hours I spent in study with any distaste is proof of that. If I did not learn a great deal from him, at any rate what I did learn I learned without difficulty and I have remembered it all.

This simple country life brought one inestimable gain. It opened my heart to friendship. It was not long before I felt a greater attachment to my cousin Bernard than ever I had done for my own brother, and it has proved permanent. We were of an age and we shared work, amusements and interests. Both of us needed a companion. For five whole years, first in Bossey and then in Geneva, we were almost inseparable. We had occasional fights, I admit, but our quarrels never lasted more than a quarter of an hour, which is very unusual for children.

My way of life at Bossey suited me so well that if only it had lasted longer it would have fixed my character permanently on a basis of kindly peaceable sentiments.

I do not believe that there was ever a human being whose nature was freer from vanity than mine. What I desired most of all was to be loved by everyone who had to do with me. I was good-tempered and so were my cousin and those who looked after us. Everything encouraged in me the kindly dispositions natural to me. I shall always remember the pained look in Mlle Lambercier's face when I hesitated in answering the catechism in church. That distressed me even more than the shame of a public failure. The possibility of a reprimand from her troubled me less than the fear of vexing her.

Neither she nor her brother was lacking in severity when it was necessary but since this severity was usually just and never excessive I took their scolding to heart and was never refractory. I was more hurt by the expression of displeasure than by physical punishment. It embarrasses me to go into this matter in detail but there is need for it. People would treat children very differently if only they realized the effects in later life of the indiscriminate and sometimes ill-considered punishments they employ. The important lesson that may be drawn from my own case has decided me to tell about it.

Since Mlle Lambercier had for us a mother's affection she also had a mother's authority, and it sometimes led her to inflict on us the childish punishments we deserved. For a considerable time she confined herself to threats of a beating, and the threat of a punishment I had never experienced was enough to frighten me. But when I was actually punished I found it less terrible than I had expected. The strange thing was that it increased my affection for her. So much so that it was only the deep affection I had for her and my own good disposition that kept me from seeking a repetition of the punishment by deliberate misbehaviour. For I had found in the pain and even in the shame of it an element of sensuality that left me with the desire for another application of her hand. Doubtless there was a precocious sexual instinct involved, and the same punishment administered by her brother would not have seemed pleasant in the least. But with his kindly nature

there was no chance of him taking over this task from her. So if I refrained from deserving correction, it was only because I did not want to vex Mlle Lambercier.

The next lapse did not come through a deliberate fault on my part, but I admit that I profited by it with an easy conscience. This second time, however, was the last, for Mlle Lambercier having no doubt perceived that the punishment was not serving the purpose intended declared that she found it exhausting and was giving it up. Up to this time we had slept in her room and sometimes in the winter we shared her bed. Two days later we were transferred to another bedroom and I had the unwanted honour of being treated by her as a big boy.

Who would have imagined that this punishment which I received at the hands of a woman of thirty when I was eight years old would have determined my likings and desires and passions for the rest of my life, and caused them to take a direction contrary to the one they should have followed in the course of nature? At the very time my senses were inflamed my desires underwent so great a change that they were arrested at this point, and never sought any other outlet afterwards. With sensuality burning hot in my veins almost from my birth, I kept myself pure and uncorrupted right up to the age when even the coldest and most backward temperaments develop. Tormented for a long time without knowing why, I gloated with ardent eye on beautiful women, but only thought of them as so many Mlle Lamberciers.

Even from the age of nubility this strange taste of mine which persistently threatened to make me depraved actually served to keep me morally decent. If ever an education was chaste and modest it was mine. The respect due to children was most carefully observed in my home, especially with me, and the same thing held good in M. Lambercier's establishment. Not only had I no clear idea of sex union right up to my adolescence, but the confused thoughts I had of it always took an odious and disgusting form. I had a horror of immorality

of every kind. The antipathies due to my education would have been sufficient of themselves to hold back the first outbursts of a temperament like mine. But, as I have indicated, they were strengthened by the effect of my first experiences of sensuality. My erotic desires only took me to the voluptuous pleasure I had known and never to that which I had been taught to regard as hateful. And so it came that though I was precociously lascivious I went through the period of puberty without desiring or even knowing any other sensual pleasures than those of which Mlle Lambercier had given me the idea in all innocence. When in the course of the years I became a man I was still preserved by this mixed state of mind. The tastes of my childhood instead of disappearing became so closely associated with those of later life that I was never able to separate them when I was sensually aroused. And so I have kept my sentiments pure and my morals decent.

One day I was alone in the room next the kitchen, learning my lessons. When Mlle Lambercier came in she found the teeth of the comb she had left to dry on the stove broken on one side. Who had done it? No one had been in the room but myself. Mlle Lambercier put the blame on me, but I stubbornly asserted that I had not touched it. They sent for my uncle and I was severely punished, not by Mlle Lambercier this time. Even so, they failed to extort the confession they wanted. Several times they came back to the matter but I remained obdurate. Imagine the effect of all this on a child who had always been treated with kindness and consideration, and was now suffering gross injustice on the part of those he loved and respected most of all. What a complete upset of all his ideas! What a harassment of his feelings! All his little being, intellectual and moral, thrown into utter confusion. Even yet, I cannot realize all that went on within me at this time. As I write, I feel my pulse beat faster. Even if I live to be a thousand I shall always remember that time. This first experience of violence and injustice has remained so deeply impressed on my heart that anything that relates to it brings back the first emotion. The feeling which only

concerned myself in the first instance has come to have a permanent character of its own and the sight or the mention of any unjust action inflames my heart as if I were the sufferer.

Thus came to an end the peaceful calm of my early life. From that time I ceased to enjoy a simple happiness, and even today I feel that the memory of childhood's charms stops here. We stayed some months longer at Bossey but all the joy had gone out of our lives. The ties of affection and trust which had bound us to our guides had been broken. We began to be secretive, rebellious, deceitful. Even the country had lost its charms. We stopped tending our little gardens and no longer hailed the sprouting of the seeds we had sown with shouts of joy. We came to dislike the life we were living, and the people grew to dislike us. So my uncle took us away, with little regret on either side.

Some thirty years have passed since my departure from Bossey and the memories of my stay there have never brought me much pleasure. But now that I am declining into my old age I find these memories reviving and impressing themselves on me with increasing charm and interest, as if I were conscious of life slipping away and I was seeking to lay hold of it again at its beginnings. The smallest details of this time bring me pleasure. I recall places and persons and times minutely. I see the servants busy in the room, a swallow coming in at the window, a fly alighting on my hand as I am reciting my lesson. I see the whole layout of the room in which we sat: M. Lambercier's study on the right, an engraving showing all the popes, a barometer and a large calendar, raspberry canes which darkened the window and sometimes made their way into the room from the garden. All this is of little interest to the reader but it gives me a gentle thrill as I recall it.

On my return to Geneva I spent two or three years with my uncle, waiting for a decision about what was to be made of me. As he intended his son to be an engineer he set him to learn a little drawing and taught him the Elements of Euclid. I learned these things with my cousin and I came to like them, especially the draw-

ing. Meantime the question was whether I was to become a watchmaker or a lawyer or a minister. I myself would have chosen the ministry, for I would have liked to preach. But the small income from my mother's estate that had to be shared between my brother and myself was insufficient to meet the cost of my studies. As the matter was not urgent, I stayed on with my uncle in the meantime, paying for my keep and rather wasting my time.

My uncle was a pleasure-loving man like my father but he was less faithful in the performance of his duties, and he gave little thought to us. My aunt was a devout woman, inclined to be pietistic, and she was more interested in psalm-singing than in our education. As a result the two of us were left in almost complete freedom, which we never abused. We were inseparable and had no need of other company, and having no temptation to associate with the young scamps of our own age we did not form any of the loose habits which idleness might have produced.

I am even wrong to suggest that we were idle. It was just the opposite with us. We were fortunate in having a whole succession of pastimes that kept us so busy in the house that we had no inducement to go out into the street. We made cages, kites, flutes, drums, houses, pop guns and cross bows, and we spoiled our old grandfather's tools, making watches like him. What gave us most pleasure was to scribble and draw and paint, and make a mess of colours. An Italian showman called Gamba Corta came to Geneva with a marionette show. We went to see him once, but that was enough for us. His marionettes acted comedies of a sort, so we set about making our own marionettes and composed comedies for them. Then in spite of having no practice in it we imitated the throaty speech of Mr Punch and played these comedies to an audience of our long-suffering relatives. But one day my uncle Bernard read the family a very fine sermon of his own, and we gave up the comedies and began to make sermons ourselves. These details I am ready to admit are not specially interesting, but they show that our early education was in the right direction, and that

though at this tender age we were largely masters of our time (and ourselves) we were rarely tempted to misspend it. We had so little need of companions that we never tried to find them. On our walks we saw the children at their games but we had no thought of joining them. Our friendship so completely occupied our hearts that we had only to be together to find delight in the simplest interests.

As my cousin was very tall and I was very small we made an oddly assorted pair. He had a rather peculiar appearance and gait which caused the children to mock him and shout nicknames after him. This did not trouble him greatly, but it angered me and made me want to fight, which was what the little wretches were after. I fought and I was beaten, and my cousin, doing his best to back me, received a punch that knocked him over. After that we did not venture out unless the boys were in school for fear they would follow us and jeer at us.

Here then was I, engaged in righting wrongs. All I needed to make me a perfect knight was a lady—and I had two of them. I went for occasional short visits to my father at Nyon in the canton of Vaud. He was well thought of, and I came in for a share of his popularity. One of his friends, Madame de Vulson, showed me very special affection, and her daughter added to my happiness by taking me for her little lover. She was twenty-two and I was eleven, but it did not seem to me that there was any great disparity between us. I gave myself to her with all my heart, or rather I should say with all my head, for my love scarcely went beyond that, though my transports at times resulted in ridiculous scenes. At the same time as this was happening I was having short passionate meetings with a young girl, Mlle Goton. She was pleased to play instructress to me in her proud overbearing fashion. Though not much more than a child herself she treated me as a child, and took liberties with me which she would not allow me to take with her. Even so I was completely happy with her.

I gave my whole self to both girls so completely that when I was with one of them I gave no thought to the other. Actually there was no resemblance whatever in the

emotions they roused. The two kinds of love, though very real and quite different from friendly affection, had nothing in common. The pleasure I had in meeting Mlle de Vulson was calm and had nothing of passion in it. I had a tender interest in her and suffered when she was ill and would willingly have given my own health to restore hers. When I was away from her I missed her and kept thinking of her. When we were together her caresses warmed my heart but had no effect on my senses. All the same I could not have endured seeing her give as much to another. I loved her like a brother, but I had something of a lover's jealousy. It was different with Mlle Goton. The same attention given by her to anyone else would have made me as jealous as a Turk and a very tiger. I had only to see her, and my feelings all went topsy turvy. I could think of nothing else. I believe that if I had stayed any longer with her the palpitations of my heart would have choked me and I would have died.

It was fortunate for both of us that my meetings with Mlle Goton did not go on very long. She gave away our secret and we were forced to separate. My affair with Mlle de Vulson continued rather longer but it also ended in catastrophe. Our relations though less lively were perhaps more binding. We never parted without tears and every time I left her I had an overwhelming feeling of emptiness. To moderate the sadness of separation we wrote letters pathetic enough to crack a rock. She came to see me in Geneva, and for two days I was fairly intoxicated. Then eight days later I heard she was married, and that she had been in Geneva to buy her wedding dress. In my lofty fury I swore that I would never see the treacherous creature again, but she managed to survive in spite of that!

The Unfinished Apprenticeship (1723-1728)

And so before my future career had been decided, this most precious period of my childhood was wasted in trivialities. After much discussion of my natural aptitudes, my relatives decided on the course for which I was

least suited. I was sent to the Town Clerk's office to study the law under him. But I found the job intolerably boring. I had to work hard under strict supervision and my dislike grew worse as time went on. The Town Clerk for his part constantly scolded me for my stupidity, and finally I was discharged as a hopeless fool, only fit, as the clerks said, to handle a watchmaker's file.

Next I was bound apprentice, not to a watchmaker but to an engraver. The trade itself was not displeasing. I had a taste for drawing and I quite liked working with etching tools. But my master was a boorish young man, who was not long in dulling the ardour of my childhood and reducing me in spirit to the mean condition of an apprentice. My Latin and my history were completely forgotten. I no longer remembered that there had ever been Romans in the world. The vilest tastes and basest actions took the place of my harmless amusements. Considering the good upbringing I had had, I must have had a strong tendency to degenerate, for I went from bad to worse with the greatest ease. My master's tyranny resulted in a trade I might have loved becoming quite unbearable, and led me to vices like lying and stealing, which I would otherwise have hated.

But though I acquired the vices of my station it was impossible for me to get a taste for them. I became bored with my companions' amusements, and when excessive restraint took the heart out of my work I grew tired of everything. In this state of mind I came back to my long-lost taste for books, and when I was punished for stealing time from my work for reading, the taste became a passion. The Library of Madame La Tribu provided me with books of every kind, whether good or bad did not matter. I read at my bench, I read when going on errands, I read in the closet; and for long hours I forgot myself completely. I did nothing but read. My master caught me and beat me. He took away my books and destroyed some of them. When I had no money to repay Madame La Tribu I gave her the clothes off my back. Every Sunday I took my three sous of pocket money to her.

It took less than a year to get through her library and then I found myself wretchedly idle in my leisure hours. In this situation my restless imagination helped to save me from myself, and calmed the sensuality which grew with my idleness. It fed on the situations which had interested me in my reading. It brought them back to mind, it varied them and combined them. And it made me one of the characters I imagined, and put me in pleasant situations of my own choice. In the end the fictitious conditions thus created enabled me to forget the realities with which I was dissatisfied. This fondness for imaginary objects and the readiness with which I could occupy myself with them produced an aversion to everything around me and led to the fondness for solitude which has remained with me since that time.

So I reached the age of sixteen, restless and discontented, hating my job, having none of the pleasures of my age, consumed by desires I did not understand, yearning for I knew not what. And all the while I cherished my idle fancies, for lack of anything I could see as good as them in the real world.

On Sundays my companions came to take me out with them for a game after church. I would have escaped from them if I could, but once I got into their games I was keener than any of them. As happened always, I was hard to rouse and just as hard to hold back. When we went for a walk outside the city I went further away than the others. Twice the city gates were shut before I could get back to them and I had to stay outside overnight. You can imagine the punishment I received from my master next day. I determined not to run the risk of any repetition. But the third time, so much dreaded, came. On this occasion I heard the Retreat sounded when I was half a league from the gate, and I ran back as hard as I could, only to see the first bridge raised when I was still twenty paces off. In the throes of my anxiety I threw myself on the grass and bit the earth. Lying there, I decided that I would not go back to my master, and next day when the two companions who had been shut out with me returned to the city I said Good Bye to them for ever.

It was a sad moment for me when my fear suggested the idea of running away, but when the time came to carry out my plan it seemed to me quite delightful. My one thought was the sense of independence I imagined I had won. I was free and my own master.

The Religious Background (Book II)

I grow more convinced every day that if ever a child received a sound and reasonable education it was I. I was born into a family superior in its ways to people in general. From my kinsfolk I had learned only the lessons of wisdom and been shown examples of honour. Though my father was a pleasure-loving man, he was upright and truly religious. In society he behaved as a gentleman, and at home he was a Christian. He had inspired in me from an early age his own sentiments. My three aunts were all good virtuous women. The two older ones were very pious, and the youngest of them, a woman who combined grace, intelligence and good sense, was perhaps even more devout but made less show of it. From this fine family I went on to M. Lambercier, who was not only a minister and a preacher, but a real Christian who came near living up to what he professed. By their wise and kindly instruction his sister and he nourished those principles of piety which they found in my heart. So sincere and reasonable were the means these worthy people employed that I never left church unmoved, or without resolutions to live a good life which I generally managed to keep when I remembered them. In my aunt Bernard's house the religion rather annoyed me, because she made a business of it. With my master I gave scarcely any thought to it at all, but there was no change in my views. I met no young people to corrupt me. I became a rascal but not a libertine. Consequently I had all the religion a child of my years could have. Perhaps even more. I am not going to hide my thoughts about this. I was never a real child. I always felt and thought like a man. It was only as I grew up that I got back to my proper age.

The Project for the Education of M. de Sainte-Marie (1740)

[The reading of Locke's *Thoughts on Education* led Rousseau to think of teaching as his life-work; but a year's experience with the two young sons of M. de Mably, provost-marshal of Lyons and brother of the famous Condillac and of the Abbé de Mably, was sufficient to convince him of his utter unfitness for the task. His main deficiency, as he admits in the *Confessions,* where the story is told at length without any attempt to disguise his failure, was largely temperamental. He was fond of children and he liked the work, but he had the unhappy knack of getting on bad terms with his pupils. But the year spent with M. de Mably's boys was by no means lost. There is little doubt that it was this experience of educational work that gave him a lifelong interest in the problems of education, and led to the writing of the *Emile* some twenty years later. In the *Project for the Education of M. de Sainte-Marie,* which was drawn up after he had been teaching the boys for seven or eight months, quite a number of the topics dealt with in the *Emile* make their first appearance. The point of view of the *Project,* however, is not that of the *Emile* but that of Locke's *Thoughts.* Sainte-Marie, it should be added, was the elder of the two brothers. He was eight years of age at this time.]

You have done me the honour, sir, to entrust the education of your children to me. It is but right that I should respond to your trust with all the care and the intelligence of which I am capable. To do that, it has

seemed to me that it ought to be my first aim to be thoroughly acquainted with the pupils with whom I have to deal. This, indeed, has occupied most of the time that I have had the honour to spend in your house; and I think I am now sufficiently sure of my ground to be able to determine the plan of their education.

It is probable, sir, that having done me the kindness of taking me into your house on an honourable appointment, you have expected from me results commensurate with the favourable conditions. It is quite evident that there was no need for so much expense and ceremony, if all you wanted was to give your children an ordinary tutor, to teach them the rudiments, orthography, and the catechism. For this reason I am resolved to justify by every means in my power the high hopes you have formed on my account; and though I am full of faults and weaknesses, you will never find me coming short for an instant in the zeal and attachment I owe my pupils.

But, sir, whatever care I may take, success does not by any means depend on me alone. It is the perfect harmony that ought to exist between us, the confidence you deign to accord me, and the authority you give me over my pupils, that will determine the effect of my work. It must be quite evident to you, sir, that a man who has no rights of any kind over children, either to make their lessons agreeable or to impose burdens on them, will never acquire a mastery over minds, which, at a certain age, even when precocious, always regulate three-quarters of their operations by the impressions of the senses. You can understand, also, that a teacher who is obliged to carry complaints about all a child's faults will avoid making himself a nuisance by a constant renewal of vain lamentations, whenever he can do so with decency. Moreover, a great many small but decisive occasions for making a correction or expressing approval are missed in the absence of the father or the mother, or at the times when it would be unseemly to break in upon them for this disagreeable purpose;

and it is too late to return to the matter at another time, when a change in the child's ideas might make a course of action harmful that would previously have been salutary. In the end the child, who is quick to note the powerlessness of the teacher, takes the chance to slight his prohibitions and his precepts, and to destroy beyond hope of recovery the ascendancy which the teacher attempted to assume. You must not think, sir, that when I speak in this strain, I desire to get the right to maltreat your children with blows. I have already spoken out against this method. I should be sorry if this were the only way of compelling Sainte-Marie to behave; and I venture to promise to get by methods less harsh and more seemly all that can reasonably be required from him, if you approve of the plan which I have the honour to put before you. Besides, to speak quite frankly, if you think, sir, that there would be any ignominy in your son being struck by a stranger's hands, I for my part consider that a decent man could scarcely put his hands to more shameful use than to maltreat a child with them. But there is no lack of ways to punish Sainte-Marie in case of need, by means of mortifications that would make a greater impression and produce better results; for in a mind as nimble as his, the thought of the blows would disappear with the pain, while the idea of an evident contumely or a sensible deprivation would endure much longer.

A teacher ought to be feared. For this the pupil must be quite convinced that he has the right to punish him. But still more, he ought to be loved; and what means has a tutor to make himself loved by a child whom he is always setting to distasteful occupations, if he cannot at the same time grant him certain little odd presents, which cost neither time nor money, but when given at the right moment are greatly appreciated by the child and make him attached to his teacher? I shall not insist very much on this point, because a father may reserve to himself the exclusive right of granting favours to his son, without serious harm, provided he takes the following precautions (which are specially necessary with a

boy like Sainte-Marie, whose vivacity and lack of concentration call for a greater degree of dependence): 1. Before making him any present, to learn privately whether the tutor has reason to be satisfied with the child's conduct. 2. To inform the young man that when he has any favour to ask, he is to do so through the tutor. 3. To take the opportunity thus afforded, to expostulate occasionally with the tutor for being too good, and injuring his pupil's progress by being too ready to comply with his wishes. 4. If the teacher thinks there is reason to object to some present that it is proposed to give his pupil, to refuse absolutely to grant it until he has succeeded in making his peace with his instructor. Further, it will not be at all necessary to explain to a young child, at the time that he is receiving a particular favour, that it is because he has done his duty; but it is better that he should think of pleasures and favours as the natural consequences of wisdom and of good conduct, rather than regard them as arbitrary recompenses dependent on caprice, that are never to be held out as the object and reward of study and virtue.

These at the very least sir, are the rights you ought to grant me over your son if you wish to give him a satisfactory education, worthy of the many fine qualities in him that at present are obscured by perversities calling for speedy correction. It is quite different with Condillac. So many precautions are not necessary in his case. He has as much need to be pushed on as his brother to be held back, and I shall be quite able to depend on myself for all the authority that I require over him. But it is essential for the education of Sainte-Marie to put a curb on him he will feel, one capable of holding him in; and as things actually are, the sentiments you want him to have with respect to me depend much more on you than on me.

Happily, at his age the evil is not great. We have had leisure to take each other's measure without the delay having had an adverse effect on his progress as yet. But as bad habits, which are dangerous at every age, are infinitely more so at his, it is time to make a serious at-

tempt to control them, not so much for the purpose of burdening him with studies and duties, but to incline him to obedience and docility in childhood in preparation for a later time.

We are drawing near to the end of the year. You could not get a more natural occasion than the beginning of a new year to make a little speech to your son, such as he could understand, putting before him the advantages of a good education and the drawbacks of a misspent childhood, and urging him to submit with a good grace to what our knowledge of his real interests makes us exact from him. After that you might have the goodness to declare to him in my presence that you make me the depositary of your authority over him; and that you grant me without reserve the right to compel him to do his duty, by all the means that appear to me proper. And following this up, you might order him, under pain of your displeasure, to obey me as he would yourself.

These, sir, are the preliminaries that appear to me indispensable to make sure that the care I shall give your son will not be wasted. I am now going to make a rough sketch of his education as I have planned it, on my present knowledge of his character and of your views. I do not put it forward as a rule that must be followed closely, but as a project that needs to be corrected and reconstructed by your intelligence and that of Abbé de Mably, and that is only intended to give your brother the Abbé some idea of the individual bent of the child with whom we have to deal. I shall esteem myself happy if he is willing to guide me in the paths I am to tread. He may be sure that I shall make it an inviolable principle to follow absolutely the paths he takes the trouble to mark out for me with your assent.

The end that one should set before himself in the education of a young man is to form his heart, his judgment, and his mind—in the order in which I name them. Most teachers, and especially the pedants, look on the acquisition and the accumulation of knowledge as the sole object of a good education, without thinking that, as Molière says,

Un sot savant est sot plus qu'un sot ignorant.

On the other hand, many fathers despise all that goes by the name of studies, and take little pains beyond training their children in physical exercises and a knowledge of the world. Between these extremes, we shall observe a just mean in the education of your son. Knowledge ought not to be neglected: I shall speak of that immediately. At the same time it should not have precedence of morals, especially in a bright, eager mind, little capable of attention up to a certain age, that is soon to have its character fixed. What is the good of a man knowing Varro, if at the same time he cannot think accurately? And if he has had the misfortune to get his heart corrupted, the knowledge in his head is like weapons in the hands of a madman. Of two people, equally engaged in vice, the one less educated will always do less evil. Even those branches of knowledge that are most speculative and that seem most remote from social affairs do not fail to exercise the mind, and in doing so to give it a power that is easily abused in the intercourse of life when the heart is bad.

In the case of Sainte-Marie there is a further consideration. He has taken so strong a dislike to everything that bears the name of study and calls for application, that much art and time will be needed to overcome it; and it would be a pity for him to lose this time. It would take too much trouble to compel him to learn, and in any case it would be much better for him to be ignorant of study and knowledge altogether than to be acquainted with them only to detest them.

In the case of religion and morality, it is not by the multiplication of precepts that we will manage to inspire him with solid principles, to serve as a rule of conduct for the rest of his life. Apart from the elementary facts within the comprehension of a boy of his years, we should avoid tiring out his memory with a detailed list of laws and duties, and prefer to make his mind and heart disposed to know and experience them, when the occasion for developing them in him presents itself. This preliminary acquaintance with morality and

religion is exactly right for his age and his mind, because it does not go beyond curious and interesting subjects relating to social intercourse, to the arts and the crafts, and to the various ways in which men have been made useful and necessary to each other by Providence. These subjects, which are topics to be taken up in ordinary conversation rather than definitely prescribed studies, will have other advantages, the effect of which appears to me sure.

In the first place, they will not affect him disagreeably with the idea of constraint and of regular study, nor compel a constant and exacting attention; consequently, they will have no ill effects on his health. In the second place, they will accustom him to reflection and to a consideration of the causes and effects of things, at an early age. In the third place, they will provoke his curiosity and inspire him with a taste for the natural sciences.

I wish at this point to anticipate the impression that might be got from my project, that I am trying to procure an enjoyable time for myself, and to get rid of all that is dry and troublesome in lessons in order to make my own work more agreeable. Let me say once for all, that being jealous to a scruple for the execution of my duty, I am incapable of becoming slack in the performance of it. Neither my tastes nor my principles lead me to slackness or idleness; but of two ways that promise me the same success, I shall always prefer the one that is less painful and unpleasant for my pupils. And without posing as a hard worker, I venture to affirm that the less they appear to work, the more in reality shall I be working for them.

If there are any occasions on which severity is necessary in dealing with children, it is when the morals are attacked, or when it is a question of correcting bad habits. Oftentimes, the greater the intelligence a child has, and the more he is aware of his own abilities, the less he is inclined to learn what has still to be learned. The result is contempt for inferiors, disobedience to superiors, and rudeness with equals. Sainte-Marie is too intelligent not to be conscious of his fine qualities; but

unless care is taken, he will set too much store by them, and neglect to derive from them all the advantage he should. These beginnings of vanity have already produced many little tendencies that need correction. In this matter, sir, we cannot be too careful to act in harmony. It is very important that on those occasions when I have had reason to be dissatisfied with him, he should meet with an appearance of contempt and indifference on all hands. In this way, pride will be fought with its own weapons, and attacked at its very source. You may be quite sure that Sainte-Marie is too well born not to be acutely sensitive to the esteem of those who are dear to him.

Integrity of heart when fortified by reason produces an accurate mind. A good man almost always thinks accurately; and with a little experience, one who has been accustomed from infancy not to confuse himself when he reflects, nor to yield himself to present pleasure until he has weighed the consequences and balanced the advantages and the disadvantages, has nearly all the requirements for forming the judgment. It seems, indeed, that good sense depends more on the sentiments of the heart than on the clearness of the mind; the common experience is that the people with most learning and enlightenment are not always those who conduct themselves best in the business of life. So after we have equipped Sainte-Marie with good moral principles, we may consider him as in a sense fairly advanced in the science of reasoning. If there is any point of special importance in his education, it is undoubtedly this. Too much care cannot be taken to give him a knowledge of men, so that he can get at them through their virtues or even their vices, and make use of them for his purpose, and can at all times choose the best course on difficult occasions. That depends partly on the way he is trained to view objects and to look at them from all sides, and partly on his experience of the world. So far as the first of these is concerned, you, sir, can help considerably, and with great success, by occasionally pretending to consult him as to the way in which you should

act in certain invented situations. That will flatter his vanity, and he will not regard as a task the time spent in deliberations on a matter in which his opinion is to count for something. It is in conversations like these that he can get most light on the knowledge of the world. He will learn more in two hours' time by this method than he would learn in a year from ordinary instructions. But care must be taken to put before him only matters suited to his years, and above all to exercise him for a long time on cases where the best course is readily seen —as much to lead him easily to find it for himself, as to avoid making him regard the affairs of life as a series of problems in which, the different courses being to all appearance equally probable, it would be almost a matter of indifference whether he chose one or another. This would lead him to indolence in reasoning and to indifference in conduct.

Experience of the world is also an absolute necessity; the more so because Sainte-Marie, being naturally timid, needs to see company often to learn to be at his ease in it. With a view to that, sir, you might have the goodness to indicate to me two or three houses to which I could take him occasionally under the guise of recreation and reward. It is true that having to correct in myself the faults that I seek to prevent in him, I might seem little fitted for this task. It is your part, sir, and that of his mother, to see what is best for him, and to go to the trouble of taking him out with you sometimes, if you judge that that is more advantageous for him. It will also be a good thing to keep him in the room when you have company, and to give him a chance of joining insensibly in the conversation by asking him occasional questions about what is being said.

It would be a great mistake for anyone to conclude from all that I have just said that I wanted to escape from the trouble of teaching, or that perhaps I had the bad taste to despise the various branches of knowledge, and had no intention of training your son in them; and that, after teaching him the indispensable elements, I would stop there and not take the trouble to push him

on in the proper studies. The people who know me would not reason in this fashion. They know my declared taste for these sciences. And even if I had had little inclination for them, I have cultivated them enough to have been compelled to make progress in them.

It is foolish to depreciate learning, and to deny the need for it, and to enlarge on its bad effects. Knowledge will always be good and useful. As for pedantry, it is not study itself that is responsible for it but the bad disposition of the student. True men of learning are refined men; they are modest, because the knowledge of what they lack keeps them from being vain about what they possess. It is only the petty geniuses and the half-learned men who think they know everything and look down with contempt on what they themselves do not know. Besides, the taste for books is a great resource in life, even for a soldier. It is a fine thing not to be always in need of the company of others to get pleasures for one's self. There are so many unjust deeds done in the world and so many changes of fortune, that a man has often occasion to count himself happy that he can find friends and comforters in his library in default of those whom the world takes from him or refuses to him.

But the difficulty is to get this taste developed in your son, who actually shows a shocking aversion for everything that savours of application. The source of this antipathy is an excessive fondness for wasting his time, which he has acquired through playing with his brothers and his sister. He cannot suffer a moment's distraction from his play, and detests everything that takes him away from it. At the same time, I am convinced that he does not really hate study in itself, and some of his inclinations even seem full of promise. To remedy this weakness, other amusements would be needed to detach him from the trifles with which he occupies himself, and it would be better if he could be separated a little from his brothers and his sister. This is scarcely possible in an apartment like mine, that is too small for the movements of so lively a child. It is more important than you

think, sir, that he should have a satisfactory room for studying and living in at ordinary times. I should try to make it agreeable for him by giving him all the fun I could. It would be a great gain to make him happy in the place where he is to study. Then to get him gradually broken off from his childish pranks, I should take a share in all his amusements, and procure for him those most fitted to please him and to stimulate his curiosity. Little games, paper-cutting, some drawing, music, instruments, a prism, a microscope, a burning glass, and a great many other knick-knacks, would provide me with things to divert him and to attach him gradually to his own room till he was happier there than anywhere else.

Here is how I would go to work to get him to study of his own accord. At the hours when I wanted him to be busy I should take away every kind of amusement, and put the work for the hour before him. If he did not apply himself to it with a good grace, I should not even seem to take any notice, and leave him alone without amusement until the weariness of having absolutely nothing to do brought him of himself to do what I required. Then I should try to diffuse playfulness and gaiety over his work to make him appreciate the difference that there is between laziness and an honourable occupation, even in respect of pleasure. If this method did not succeed, I should not beat him; but I should withhold all recreation for that day, saying to him coldly that I did not pretend to force him to study, and that diversion being only legitimate as a relaxation from work, those who do nothing have no need of it. Further, you might have the goodness to agree with me on a sign by which, without any appearance of giving information, I could indicate to you that I was displeased with him. Then the coldness and indifference he would meet on all hands—yet without the least overt reproach—would surprise him all the more because he had not noticed me making any complaint; and he would come to think that as the natural recompense of duty is friendship and the caresses of his elders, in the same way idleness and sloth bring with them a certain

contemptible character that immediately makes itself felt, and causes everybody to be chilly to him.

I knew an affectionate father who adopted the method that I am explaining here. When meeting his children he glanced at their tutor before they approached. If the tutor touched the first button of his coat with his right hand, it was a sign that he was pleased, and the father caressed his son in his usual way. If the tutor touched the second button, it was a sign of perfect satisfaction, and the father set no limits to the tenderness of his caresses, and generally gave him some present. When the tutor made no sign, that meant that he was badly pleased, and the father's coldness corresponded with the tutor's displeasure; but when he touched his first buttonhole with his left hand, the father made the son leave his presence, and the tutor then informed him about the child's faults. I saw this young lord acquire such great perfection in a short time, that I do not think it possible to expect too much from a method that produced results so excellent. It is only by means of perfect harmony and co-operation like this between a father and an instructor that the success of a good education can be ensured. And just as it would be useless for the best of fathers to take steps to educate his son well, if at the same time he left him in the hands of an inattentive tutor, so the most zealous and intelligent teacher would waste his efforts if the father, instead of supporting him, destroyed his work by counter influences.

In order that your son may put his heart into his studies, you might have the goodness to ask him occasional questions about his progress, but only at the times and in the subjects in which he has done best, so that there will be nothing but satisfaction and contentment to be noted by you. Sometimes also, but more rarely, your examination should turn on the subjects he has neglected. In that case, you should question him about his health and the reasons for his slackness, with signs of concern that will communicate themselves to him.

The order of his studies will be very simple for the first two or three years. The elements of Latin, history, and geography will occupy his time. With regard to

Latin, I do not propose to train him by a too methodical study, and still less by the composition of themes. Themes, in the opinion of M. Rollin, are children's crosses; and in accordance with my intention to make his studies agreeable, I shall take good care to let him escape this cross, and not put into his head the bad Gallicisms of my own Latin in place of the Latin of Livy, Cæsar, and Cicero. In any case, a young man, especially if intended for the army, studies Latin to understand it and not to write it; and indeed will not need to write it once in a lifetime. It is enough, therefore, for him to translate the ancient authors, and to acquire the taste for good Latinity and for literature through reading them. That is all I mean to exact from him in this subject.

For history and geography, all that is called for at first is an easy smattering, from which I shall banish everything that savours of dryness and of study. The most necessary difficulties of chronology and the sphere, I shall reserve for a more advanced age. Further, I shall depart from the ordinary plan of studies and put more stress on modern than on ancient history. I regard modern history as much more suitable for an officer; and moreover, I am convinced with respect to modern history in general, of the truth of what the Abbé has said about French history in particular, that it is not less abundant in great features than ancient history, and that all it needs is better historians to put these in as fine a light.

In Sainte-Marie's case, I intend to suppress all those kinds of studies in which young men are allowed to languish for a number of years without any solid experience. Rhetoric, logic, and the scholastic philosophy are all of them, in my judgment, superfluous for him; and in any case, I should be little fit to teach him. The only things I shall make him read when the time comes are the *Logic* of Port Royal and (at most) Lami's *Art de Parler,* but without amusing him on the one hand with the details of tropes and figures, or on the other hand with the vain subtleties of dialectic. All I purpose is to

train him in precision and purity of style, in the order and method of reasoning, and in the acquisition of an exact mind that will enable him to distinguish the adorned lie from the simple truth every time there is need.

From the way in which it is treated, natural history may be regarded to-day as the most interesting of all the branches of knowledge cultivated by mankind, and the one that leads us most naturally from admiration of the works to love for the Workman. I shall not fail to stir up his curiosity in those matters that relate to it. It is my intention to introduce him to it in two or three years' time, by the perusal of the *Spectacle of Nature* which I shall make follow that of Nieuwentit.

It is not possible to go far in physics without the aid of mathematics, and I shall give him a year of mathematics. This will further serve to teach him to reason logically, and to fix his mind on his work a little, which is a training he greatly needs. It will also give him the chance of being better thought of among officers, who need to have a smattering of mathematics and of fortifications as a part of their profession.

Finally, if it happens that my pupil remains long enough in my hands, I shall venture to give him some acquaintance with moral and natural law through the reading of Puffendorf and Grotius, because it is becoming in a good man and a man of intelligence to know the principles of good and evil, and the foundations on which the society of which he forms a part is established.

In making the various subjects follow each other in this fashion, I shall not lose sight of history. It is the main object of all his studies and the one whose branches extend over all the other forms of knowledge. At the end of some years I shall bring him back to its first principles more methodically and in greater detail; and I shall then try to get him to derive all the profit that can be looked for from this study.

I propose also to provide him with amusing recreation from what properly goes under the name of literature, meaning by that the knowledge of books and au-

thors, criticism, poetry, style, eloquence, the theatre—in a word, all that can help to form his taste and give his studies a pleasant appearance.

I shall not linger any longer on this subject. I hope that now I have given some slight idea of the route that I intend to follow, more or less, in the studies of my pupil; your brother will keep the promise he made you, to draw up a plan for us that will serve to guide me on a path that is quite new to me. I beg him in advance to be assured that I shall follow it with a closeness and a care that will convince him of the profound respect I have for all that comes from him; and I venture to guarantee you that it will not be from any lack of zeal and attachment on my part if his nephews do not become perfect men.

An Extract from the Article on "Political Economy" composed for the *Encyclopédie* (1755)

[The article on Political Economy which appeared in the *Encyclopédie* in 1755 is chiefly interesting because it contains the first statement of Rousseau's fundamental political doctrine of the General Will. "The body politic," he says in this article, "is a moral being endowed with a will. This General Will, which always makes for the preservation and well-being of each and every part of the state, and is the source of the laws, is what determines justice and injustice for all its members." The General Will, he says further, is the "first principle of the public economy and the fundamental rule of government." Confining himself to what he calls legitimate or popular government—that is to say, government that makes the good of the people its chief object—he lays down some rules for the statesman. The first is that the General Will should be followed in everything. The second is that to give the General Will this predominance, the individual wills of the citizens should be brought into harmony with it. It is in discussing the latter rule that he is led to consider the part played by education in the life of the state; for, as he points out, good government, the kind of government in which the General Will is master, presupposes the right kind of education. The passage is noteworthy as the first explicit presentation of the socialistic view of education in modern times.]

. . . I end this part of the discussion of the public economy where I ought to have begun it. A true nation cannot exist without liberty, any more than liberty can

exist without virtue or virtue without citizens. Train up good citizens and you get everything. Unless you do so, you will only have base slaves, from the rulers of the state down. Now the training of citizens is not the affair of a day. To make men citizens, you must educate them from infancy. I may be told that the ruler who has men to govern should not look for a greater degree of perfection than human nature permits; that it would be wrong for him to try to destroy all passions in them; and that it would be no more desirable to carry out such a project than it would be possible. I should agree with all this, and even go further and say that a man devoid of passions would be a very bad citizen indeed. At the same time, it must be recognized that it is quite possible to train men to prefer the beautiful to the ugly. If, for example, we train them early in life never to think of their individual interests except in relation to those of the state as a whole, and never to regard their own existence as having any meaning apart from the state, they will come in course of time to identify themselves in some fashion with this grand Whole and be conscious of their membership of their fatherland, loving it with the exquisite sentiment that the solitary man keeps for himself, constantly lifting up their souls to it, and thus transforming into a sublime virtue that dangerous disposition from which flow all our vices. Not only does philosophy demonstrate the possibility of giving such a new direction to the passions, but history furnishes a thousand notable examples of it. If they are uncommon among us, it is because no one cares now whether there are citizens or not, and still less does anyone think about taking measures to train them early enough. It is too late to change our natural inclinations when they have taken their course, and self-esteem has been re-enforced by habit. It is too late to take us out of ourselves once selfishness has become concentrated in our hearts and acquired that contemptible activity that swallows up all virtue and constitutes the life of petty souls. How could the love of country spring up amid a crowd of other passions, all ready to choke it out? What

room is there for fellow-citizens in a heart already taken up with avarice, lust, and vanity?

A man should learn to deserve his life from the first instant of it; and, since he shares in civic rights as soon as he is born, the moment of birth ought to be the beginning of the performance of his duties. As there are laws for maturity, so also should there be laws for childhood, to teach the children obedience. If the reason of each individual is not allowed to be the sole judge of his duties, still less should the education of children be left to the ignorance and prejudices of their fathers. The matter is one that concerns the state more than the fathers; for, in the course of nature, the death of the father often robs him of the final fruits of this education, but sooner or later the nation feels the effect of it. The state abides: the family passes. But if the public authority takes the place of the fathers by undertaking this important function, and acquires their rights by the performance of their duties, the fathers have really little cause for complaint. All that is involved is a change of name. They will exercise in common in their civic capacity the same rights over their children as they exercised separately as fathers, and they will get as ready obedience when they speak in the name of the law as they did when they spoke in the name of nature. Public education, according to regulations prescribed by the government, and under magistrates appointed by the supreme authority, is therefore one of the fundamental requirements of popular government. If children are educated together on a footing of equality, if they are imbued with the laws of the state and the maxims of the general will, and taught to respect them above all else, if they are surrounded by examples and by objects that unceasingly remind them of the tender mother that fosters them, of the love she bears them, of the inestimable benefits they receive from her, and of the return they owe her, it cannot be doubted that they will learn in this way to cherish each other as brothers and wish only what the community wishes, and that one day they will become the defenders and the fathers of the

country of which they have so long been the children.

I shall say nothing about the magistrates destined to superintend this education, which is certainly the most important business of the state. It is evident that if such marks of public confidence were lightly bestowed, if this sublime function were not reserved for the men who had worthily discharged every other office in the state —the reward of their labours, the honourable repose of their old age, the acme of their honours—the whole enterprise would be futile, and the system of education of no effect. Wherever a lesson is not backed by authority, and precept strengthened by example, instruction remains barren. Even virtue is discredited in the mouth of one who does not practise it. But let famous warriors weighted down with their laurels preach courage, and upright judges grown white in their office teach justice. Such teachers will create virtuous successors, and transmit from age to age through successive generations the experience and talents of the rulers and the courage and virtue of the citizens, and excite a universal emulation in all to live and die for their country.

I know of only three peoples who in bygone days practised this method of public education: namely, the Cretans, the Spartans, and the ancient Persians. In all three it met with very great success, and in the case of the last two it worked wonders. Now that the world has come to be divided into nations too large to be well governed, the method has ceased to be practicable; and other reasons, that will be obvious to the reader, have prevented it being tried by any modern people. It is very remarkable that the Romans were able to get on without it; but for five centuries Rome was a constant miracle that the world must not expect to see again. The virtue of the Romans, nurtured by their hatred of tyranny and its crimes, as well as by their inborn love of country, made every home a school of citizenship; and the unlimited power of fathers over their children put so much severity into family discipline that the father was more dreaded than the magistrate, and was the censor of morals and the vindicator of the laws in his domestic tribunal.

It is by these means that an attentive and well-meaning government, exercising a constant care to maintain or to revive the love of country and of good morals among the people, prevents in good time the evils that sooner or later result from the indifference of the citizens to the fate of the commonwealth, and keeps within narrow limits that personal interest which isolates individuals to such an extent that the state is enfeebled by their power and has nothing to expect from their goodwill. Wherever the people love their country, respect the laws, and live a simple life, little is needed to make them happy; and in the administration of a state, where chance plays a smaller part than in the lot of individuals, wisdom is so near to happiness that the two can scarcely be distinguished.

The Education of Julie's Children: The New Heloïse, Part V, Letter 3 (1761)

[The long letter describing the education of Julie's children is far the most important of Rousseau's minor writings on the subject of education. *Julie, or the New Heloïse,* in which it occurs, is a lengthy romance developed in a series of letters after the manner of Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe,* which Rousseau took as his model. The epistolary novel was well suited to his genius. It gave him abundant opportunity for reflections and confessions as well as for criticisms and comments on social usages; and he made full use of the opportunity to express his own ideals of personal and social life. Some of the most noteworthy of the letters are those in which he depicts the perfect family life, which he regarded as the highest form of contemporary society. The letter in which the ideal education is described is in some sense a sequel to one of those on the ideal family. The family is that of M. de Wolmar, the husband of Julie. The writer is Saint-Preux, the former lover of Julie, who has been received by the Wolmar household as an honoured guest, and is describing its life from within.]

As usual, the children came into their mother's room after breakfast; and, instead of retiring and shutting herself up with them in the workroom, as was her custom, she let them stay with her, and our company did not break up till dinner-time. Henriette, who can just handle the needle, sat at work in front of Fanny, who was making lace, and had her cushion resting on the back of the child's chair. The two boys were busy at a

table turning over the leaves of a collection of pictures, which the older boy was explaining to the younger. Henriette, who knew the collection by heart, was always ready to correct him when he made a mistake, and, on the pretence of not knowing what picture they were at, kept running back and forward from her chair to the table. During these little lessons, which were given and received without effort or constraint, the younger boy was furtively counting some wooden counters which he had hidden under the book.

Madame de Wolmar was at work on some embroidery near the window, just opposite the children. Her husband and I were still at the tea table reading the newspaper. She paid very little attention to what was being read till we came to an article referring to the illness of the King of France, and to the singular attachment of his people, only equalled by that of the Romans for Germanicus. This led her to make some remarks on our kindly good-natured nation, which is hated by all though it hates none; and she added that the only thing that made her envy people of the highest rank was the pleasure of winning love. "You need not envy any king," said her husband. "We have all of us been your devoted subjects for many a day." At this remark her work fell from her hands. Turning her head, she gave her worthy husband a look so tender and affecting that I myself thrilled with it. She said nothing, and indeed no words could have equalled that look. Our eyes met, and by the way her husband pressed my hand I felt that the same emotion possessed all three of us, and that the sweet influence of her generous soul diffused itself around her and overcame even the insensibility of reserve.

It was in this mood that the silence of which I have spoken began:[1] you may guess that it was not due to coldness and indifference. The only thing to break it was

1 The reference is to a passage at the beginning of the letter omitted in the translation, in which the writer says that they had had "une matinée à l'angloise". The main feature of an English morning was silent meditation. "Two hours passed thus in an immobility of ecstasy, a thousand times more delightful than the cold repose of the gods of Epicurus."

the romping of the children; but as soon as we stopped talking they moderated their prattle, as though fearing to disturb the pensive quiet that prevailed. The little teacher was the first to lower her voice, and run about on tiptoe making signs to the others; and their games only became more diverting because of the new interest added by the slight constraint. This scene, that seemed to be put before us to prolong our tender feelings, had its natural effect.

Ammutiscon le lingue e parlan l'alme.—*Marini.*[1]

How much can be said without uttering a word! With ardent feelings there is no need for the cold medium of speech. Insensibly Julie became absorbed in what occupied our minds. She fixed her eyes intently on her three children, and her heart, enraptured with ecstasy, animated her charming features with all the tender sweetness of a mother's love.

Given up to this twofold contemplation, Wolmar and I were indulging our reveries, when the children who had started them brought them to an end. The older boy, who was amusing himself with the pictures, seeing that the counters kept his brother from attending, waited till he had piled them up and then gave him a blow on the hand that scattered them through the room. Marcellin began to cry, and Mme de Wolmar, without troubling to quiet him, told Fanny to take away the counters. The child became quiet immediately; and though the counters had been taken away, he did not begin to cry again, as I had expected. This incident, insignificant in itself, recalled a great many others to which I had paid no attention at the time. On thinking it over I do not remember ever seeing children to whom so little was said, give less trouble. They are rarely ever away from their mother, and yet one scarcely notices them there. They are active and frisky, as befits their years, but never importunate or obstreperous: they appear discreet before they know what discretion means. What astonished me most when I came to think of it, was

1 The tongues are silent but the hearts converse.

that this state of matters seemed to come of itself, and that in spite of her fondness for her children, Julie gave herself very little concern about them. In fact, you never see her at all anxious to make them speak or be silent, or forward to order or forbid anything. She does not dispute with them and never thwarts them in their amusements. It might almost be said that she is satisfied to see them and to love them, and that when they have spent the day with her, her whole duty as a mother has been discharged.

But though this equanimity was more pleasant for me to see than the fussy solicitude of other mothers, I was not a little struck by a touch of indolence in it that did not quite fit in with my ideas. I would rather she had not been quite so well satisfied even with so many reasons for being so: an excess of activity is really very becoming in a mother! I should have liked to attribute all the good I saw in the children to the mother. It would have been better, I thought, if they owed less to nature and more to her, and I could almost have wished some faults in them to see her urgent to correct them.

After turning these thoughts over in my mind for a considerable time without saying anything, I broke silence to communicate them to her. "I see," said I, "that Heaven rewards the virtue of mothers in the good disposition of their children. But surely this good disposition needs cultivation. Should their education not begin from the moment of their birth? Is there any time more suitable for training them than the time when they have no definite character to unmake? If you let them have their own way in childhood, you cannot expect docility from them later on. In any case, even if you had nothing else to teach them, you would need to teach them to obey you." "Have you seen them disobeying me?" she replied. "That would scarcely be possible," said I, "seeing that you impose no commands on them." She looked at her husband and began to smile. Then taking me by the hand she led me into the study, where the three of us could talk without being overheard by the children.

Here she explained her principles at leisure, and showed me that the appearance of negligence hid the

most vigilant attention ever given by maternal love. "For a long time," she said, "I was of the same opinion as you about premature instruction. Before my first child was born, I was afraid of all the responsibilities I should soon have to undertake, and I often talked apprehensively on the subject with my husband. What better guide could I get in a matter of the kind than a clear-headed observant man who combined the detachment of a philosopher with the interest of a father? He fulfilled, and even surpassed, my expectations. He dispelled my prejudices and taught me to expect a greater success than I had hoped for, with less difficulty. He made me realize that the first and most important education—the one that everybody forgets[1]—is to fit a child to be educated. An error common to all parents who pride themselves on their intelligence is to assume that their children are rational from their birth, and to talk to them as if they were grown-up, even before they can speak. It is taken for granted that reason is the faculty to be used in their instruction, whereas every other faculty ought to be used to help to form the reason, seeing that of all the capacities needed by mankind, the one acquired latest and with most difficulty is reason itself. By speaking to them from their earliest years in a language they do not understand, we accustom them to be satisfied with empty words and to deal them out to others; not only so, but we encourage them to find fault with all that is said to them, and lead them to think themselves as wise as their teachers, and to develop an argumentative and rebellious turn of mind. And after all, everything that we imagine we are getting done by this appeal to reason, is really only done from motives of fear or vanity, which invariably need to be added to reason.

"The most consummate patience would sooner or later be worn out in trying to bring up a child in this fashion; and so it comes that parents, wearied and disheartened

1 Even the wise Locke has forgotten this. He speaks much more of what should be required of children than of the means that have to be employed in getting it. (*Note by Rousseau.*)

by the habit of unceasing importunity which they themselves have fostered, are no longer able to bear the unruly behaviour of their children, and are compelled to send them off to the schoolmaster—as if they could ever expect to get from a teacher, patience and forbearance greater than a father's.

"Nature", Julie went on to say, "wants children to be children before they are men. If we deliberately pervert this order, we shall get premature fruits which are neither ripe nor well flavoured, and which soon decay. We shall have youthful sages and grown-up children. Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling, peculiar to itself: nothing can be more foolish than to seek to substitute our ways for them. I should as soon expect a child of ten to be five feet in height as to be possessed of judgment.[1]

"The reason only begins to form after several years, when the body has acquired a certain firmness. The design of nature, therefore, is to let the body be strong before the mind becomes active. Children are always in movement, and nothing is more distasteful to them than rest and reflection. A studious, sedentary life hinders their growth and development, for neither their body nor their mind can endure constraint. If they are always shut up in a room with books, they lose all their vigour, become weak and unhealthy, and turn dolts rather than rational beings; and all through life the soul is morbid because of the feebleness of the body.

"But even if all this premature instruction did as much good to the judgment as it does harm, it would still be a great mistake to give it to children indiscriminately, without regard to what suits best the genius of each. Apart from the constitution common to the species, every child brings into the world at birth an individual temperament which determines his genius and character. It is not a question of changing or restraining this temperament, but of giving it form and bringing it to perfection. According to M. de Wolmar, the initial characters are in all cases good and sound in themselves:

1 This paragraph is repeated in the *Emile*, II.

there are no blunders, he says, in nature. The vices we impute to natural disposition are invariably due to the bad forms it has assumed. There is not a scoundrel whose natural propensities would not have produced great virtues if they had been better directed. There is no mind so distorted that useful talents would not have been got from it by giving it the proper bias, just like the deformed and ugly figures which are made beautiful and well proportioned by looking at them from the right point of view. In the system of the universe everything works for the common good. Each man has his place assigned to him in the best order of things: it is important that he should find his place and not upset the general order. What, then, must be the result of a system of education which begins at the cradle and is always carried on according to a single formula, without regard to the prodigious diversity of minds? Most children, it is obvious, will get instruction that is injurious or misplaced, while the instruction really suitable for them will be omitted. Nature will be cramped on every side. The great qualities of the soul will be effaced, and mean, petty, unreal ones put in their place. The indiscriminate exercise of so many different talents on the same subjects will destroy some of the children's faculties to the advantage of others, and throw them all into confusion. Thus, after much trouble has been wasted in spoiling their natural endowment, it will not be long before it appears that the fine condition that we prefer to it is but short-lived, and that when it passes away the natural disposition which has been crushed out does not return; and so we shall lose both what we have destroyed and what we have created. In short, the only reward for the effort we have foolishly misspent will be to see all the little prodigies grow up without strength of mind and character, notable only for their inefficiency and their uselessness."

"I understand your maxims," said I to Julie, "but I find it difficult to reconcile them with your own opinions[1] concerning the small advantage of developing the

1 These were expounded in the letter immediately preceding this one: *New Heloïse*, v, 2.

genius and natural talents of every individual, either for his own happiness or for the real interest of society. Would it not be infinitely better to form a perfect model of a rational and upright man; and then aim at making every child as like this model as possible by means of education, spurring some on, holding others back, repressing the passions and perfecting the reason—in a word, correcting nature?" "Correcting nature!" said Wolmar, interrupting me: "I like your expression! But before you speak of correcting nature, you had better reply to what Julie has just said to you."

The most direct reply, it seemed to me, was to deny the principle underlying her arguments, and that is what I did. "You always take it for granted that the diversity of mind and genius that distinguishes individuals is the work of nature; but nothing is less evident. For if minds are different, they are unequal; and if nature has made them unequal, it must have been by showing preference, and giving some of them more acute senses, a more retentive memory, or a greater capacity for attention than others. Now, so far as sense and memory are concerned, experience proves that their different degrees of range or perfection are not the measure of the human mind. As for the capacity for attention, that depends solely on the strength of the passions that animate us; and experience here proves that all men by their nature are susceptible of passions strong enough to confer on them the degree of attention needed for superiority of mind.[1]

"But if the diversity of minds, instead of coming from nature were a result of education—due to the diverse ideas and sentiments excited in us from childhood by the objects that impinge upon us, by the circumstances in which we find ourselves, and by all the impressions we receive—instead of delaying children's education until we knew the character of their minds, we should need on the contrary to determine this character aright as quickly as possible, by the education most likely to produce the character we wish to give them."

1 Cf. Helvetius: *De l'Esprit,* Essay III, Summaries of Chaps. I and VIII. Rousseau reproduces the *ipsissima verba* of Helvetius.

To this argument of mine he replied that he was not in the habit of denying what he saw, because he could not explain it. "Look at these two dogs in the court," he said to me. "They are from the same litter: they have been fed and treated alike, and have never been away from each other. Yet one of them is lively, affectionate, and full of intelligence; the other is stupid, surly, and unteachable. The single difference of temperament has produced the difference of character, just as the single difference of internal organization produces the difference of minds in our own case. Everything else has been the same." "The same?" I interrupted. "You are forgetting all the differences. Think of the little things that have acted on the one and not on the other. Think of the minute circumstances that have affected them diversely, unperceived by you." "That is very fine!" he replied. "Here you are, arguing as the astrologers used to do. When the objection was made that two men born under the same aspect of the stars had very different fortunes, they absolutely denied the identity; and maintained that the rapidity of the heavenly motions put an immense distance between the schemes of the two men in the horoscope, and that if the precise instant of their births could have been noted, the objection would have been turned into a proof.

"If we avoid all these subtleties and confine ourselves to observation, it will be evident that there are some characters which reveal themselves almost at birth, and some children who can be studied on their nurse's bosom. These form a class by themselves, and their education begins as soon as they are born. In the case of those who develop more slowly, on the other hand, any attempt to form the mind before its distinctive bent is known involves the risk of spoiling the good that is due to nature, and of putting worse in its place. Was it not your master Plato who maintained that all human learning and philosophy can only get out of a human soul what nature has put into it, just as a chemical operation can never extract more gold from a mixture than it contains already? That is not true of our sentiments or our ideas;

but it is true of the predispositions that lead us to acquire them.[1] The mind can only be changed by a change in its internal organization: a change of character calls for a change in the temperament on which it depends. Have you ever heard of a hot-headed man becoming phlegmatic, or of a cold methodical mind acquiring imagination? For my own part, I believe it would be just as easy to make a dark man fair or to turn a fool into a man of understanding. If that be so, it is useless to pretend to re-make different minds on a common model. We may constrain them but we can never change them. We may prevent men from showing their real nature, but nothing we can do can make them different from what they are. Even if they disguise themselves in the ordinary course of life, you will see them resuming their original character on all important occasions, and yielding themselves to it with all the more abandon because they are no longer at home in it when they do so. Besides, it is not our business to change the character and modify the natural disposition, but rather to urge it on as far as it can go, and to cultivate it and keep it from degenerating; for only in this way can a man become all that he is capable of being, and the work of nature be made perfect by education. But before developing the character, it is necessary to study it. We must wait patiently till it shows itself and give it opportunities of doing so, and prefer to do nothing at all rather than do the wrong thing. One nature needs wings, another shackles; one should be encouraged, another held back; one has to be flattered, another to be intimidated. Sometimes we need to stimulate, at other times to retard. One man is able to carry human knowledge to its furthest point; another may find the ability to read a dangerous power. Let us wait for the first dawn of reason. It is reason that makes the character develop, and gives it its true form. By its means we cultivate character, and till it appears there can be no proper education for man.

1 Rousseau means that it is not our sentiments and ideas that are primitive but the "dispositions" that express themselves in sentiments and ideas under the influence of society. See *Emile,* I.

"With regard to these principles of Julie, which you consider to be opposed to this view, I really see nothing in them contradictory to it; indeed, I find them in perfect agreement. Each man brings to the world at birth a character, genius, and talents peculiar to himself. Those who are destined to live in rustic simplicity do not need their faculties developed to make them happy. Their buried talents are like the gold mines of the Valais which the public good does not allow to be exploited. But under the conditions of city life, where the head is of more use than the hands, and every man has to depend on himself and his fellows for the reward of his labours, it is important to be able to get out of men all the capacities with which nature has endowed them, by directing them on the side that they can go furthest, and by encouraging their special inclinations in every way that can make them of use. In the first case, only the species needs to be considered. Everyone acts alike; example is the only rule, habit the only talent, and only that part of the soul that is common to all is brought into play. But in the second case, we are dealing with the individual, with man in general; and our endeavour is to develop every capacity in which he excels his fellows, and to go with him as far as nature takes us. We are prepared to make him the greatest man in the world, if only he has the necessary ability. So little do these principles conflict, that the method to be followed with both classes of children is the same for the first years. Do not instruct the village child, since it is better for him not to be instructed. Do not instruct the town child, since you do not yet know what instruction is best for him. In every case, let the growth of the body go on till the reason begins to appear: it will then be soon enough to cultivate it."

"All this would be very fine," said I, "if it were not for one drawback I see, that detracts very greatly from the advantages you expect from your method. Does it not allow children to pick up a great many bad habits that should be prevented by teaching them good ones? Children who have been left to follow their own devices, as

you can see for yourself, soon acquire all the bad practices they see, because a bad example is easy to follow, and they never imitate the good ones that are more troublesome to perform. Being accustomed to get whatever they want, and to do whatever they please on all occasions, they become headstrong, stubborn, and intractable." "But", said M. de Wolmar, "I think you noted the contrary in our children, and that that was what led to the present conversation." "I admit it," said I, "and that is just what surprises me. What has Julie done to make them so docile? What method has she taken to bring it about? What has she substituted for the yoke of discipline?" "A far more inflexible yoke," said he immediately, "the yoke of necessity! But she will explain her views to you best by telling you exactly what she does." Then he got her to explain her method to me; and here, almost to a word, is what she said:

"In my opinion the best thing that can befall a child is to be well-born. I do not attach as much importance to the care we take as M. de Wolmar does. In spite of his principles, I am not at all sure that a good result can ever be got from a bad disposition, and that every natural tendency can be directed to good. Nevertheless, I am convinced of the soundness of his method, and I try to regulate all my conduct in the government of my family in accordance with it. My first hope is that no child of mine will ever have a vicious disposition. My second is that I shall be able to bring up the children God has given me, under their father's direction, in such a way that they will one day have the good fortune to be like him. With that in view, I have tried to make the rules he has prescribed my own, by basing them on a principle which, though less philosophical, is more in keeping with maternal love: namely, to see my children happy. This was the immediate vow of my heart when first I bore the sweet name of mother, and the one aim of my life is its fulfilment. The first time I held my eldest son in my arms, the thought came to me that childhood is almost a quarter of the longest life, and that since few people complete the other three quarters, it is a very

cruel kind of prudence to make this first part miserable to ensure happiness for the later parts that may never come. It seemed to me that during the feebleness of the first years, when nature restricts children in so many ways, it was barbarous to take from them a liberty so limited and so little capable of abuse, by adding to the restrictions of nature the tyranny of our caprice. I resolved that as far as possible I should spare my child all constraint, leaving him the full use of his petty strength, and never checking any of his natural impulses. By this course, I have already gained two great advantages. The first is, that I have been able to keep his infant soul from lying, vanity, anger, and envy, the vices resulting from subjection, which are usually provoked in children by getting them to do what is exacted of them. The other advantage is that he has been left free to strengthen his body by the continual exercise that instinct demands. Being accustomed to run about with his head exposed to sun and cold, to exert himself till he is out of breath, and to sweat freely, just like the peasants, he has hardened himself like them to the risks of the weather; and not only does he live more at his ease but he is made more robust. This is the way to prepare for manhood, and for the accidents that befall the human kind. As I have already told you, I dread the fatal pusillanimity that shows itself in an excess of delicacy and care. It makes a child weak and effeminate, torments him with unceasing restraint, and hems him in with a thousand vain precautions; and in the end, it exposes him his whole life through to the inevitable dangers from which it seeks to preserve him for the moment, and lays up lung troubles, pleurisies, sunstrokes, and death in store for later years, to save him from a few colds in childhood.

"Children who have been left to themselves only acquire the faults of which you spoke, when, not content to do what they want themselves, they can compel others to do it also—a thing made possible by the foolish indulgence of those mothers who are only pleased when people are serving the whims of their children. I flatter myself that you have not seen anything in my children

that savoured of domineering and authority, even with the meanest servant; and that just as little have you seen me applaud in private any false complacency that has been shown them. In this I believe I am following a new and sure way to make children free, gentle, affectionate, and docile—by the very simple method of convincing them that they are only children.

"Consider the child's condition. Is there a creature in the world more helpless and more wretched, more at the mercy of its surroundings, more needing pity, love, and protection, than a child? It almost seems as if this were why the first utterances to which nature prompts him were cries and wailings, and that she has given him a sweet face and touching ways for the purpose of interesting all who come near him in his weakness, and of making them eager to relieve his wants. What, then, is more shocking and more contrary to the nature of things, than to see an imperious, headstrong child giving orders to all the people about him, and shamelessly assuming the tone of a master with those who have only to abandon him to make him perish; and thoughtless parents countenancing this audacity, and training him to tyrannize over his nurse, as he will afterwards tyrannize over themselves?

"For my part I have spared no pains to prevent my boy acquiring the dangerous notion of mastery and servitude, and getting the chance to think that he received service as a right rather than as a kindness. This is perhaps the most difficult and the most important point in all education; and I cannot explain it properly without entering into all the precautions that I have been obliged to take, to prevent the appearance of the ready instinct to distinguish the mercenary services of servants from the tenderness of maternal care.

"One of my chief methods, as I have told you, has been to convince him that it is impossible for one of his age to live without our help. Once that has been made clear I have had little difficulty in showing him that the help we need to get from others makes us dependent on them, and that the servants are really his superiors, seeing that

he cannot do without them and yet can make them no return. The result is that instead of becoming vain because of the service rendered him, he receives it with a kind of humiliation as an evidence of his weakness, and longs eagerly for the time when he will be big enough and strong enough to look after himself."

"These ideas", I remarked, "would be difficult to put into practice in homes where the father and mother get served like children; but in this house, where every person, beginning with yourselves, has his own duties to perform, and where the relation of master and servant is but a constant exchange of service and attention, I do not think that it would be impossible to give effect to them. Still, I cannot yet conceive how children who are accustomed to get all their needs anticipated can be prevented expecting the same gratification of their whims; or how it is that they do not sometimes suffer from the caprice of a servant who treats a real need as though it were only a whim."[1]

"My good friend," replied Mme de Wolmar, "an ignorant mother creates difficulties for herself out of everything. The real needs are exceedingly limited both in children and in grown-up people, and we should look more to the duration of happiness than to the happiness of a single moment. You surely do not think that a child brought up without constraint can come to much harm from the caprice of a governess under the eyes of a mother. You are thinking of the troubles that spring from vices already contracted, and forgetting that my whole care has been to prevent such vices making their appearance at all. Women naturally love children, and misunderstanding only rises between them when it is sought to subject one of them to the caprices of the other. Now, in the present case that simply cannot happen, either on the part of the child, from whom nothing is exacted, or on the part of the governess, who receives no orders from the child. In this I have acted quite differently from other mothers, who make a show of want-

[1] On this distinction between real needs and needs of fancy see *Emile* II.

ing the child to obey the servant, but actually want the servant to obey the child. In this house no one commands or obeys; and the child is never treated with more deference by those who serve him than he shows for them. In that way he realizes that the only authority he has over the people around him is that which he wins by kindliness, and it makes him docile and obliging. In seeking to win the affection of others, he comes to have an affection for them; for it is the inevitable result of self-love[1] that we come to love others in making ourselves beloved; and from this reciprocal affection, that comes into being in a relationship of equality, the good qualities that are constantly being preached to children to no purpose, are developed without difficulty.

"My idea has been that the most essential part of a child's education—the part that is always neglected even in the most careful training—is to make him realize his feebleness and dependence, and as my husband has said, to feel the heavy yoke of necessity that nature imposes on man. The object of this is not merely to make him appreciate what is done to lighten this yoke for him, but still more to teach him betimes the rank of life in which he has been placed by providence, so that he may not rise above his station or count anything that is human alien to himself.

"Young people who have been softly nurtured from their birth, with everyone paying them attentions and ready to satisfy all their desires, are apt to expect everything to give way to their whims and fancies. They go into the world with this insolent prejudice, and generally are only cured by the humiliations and affronts it brings on them. Now I would rather save my son from the mortification of this second education, by giving him a sounder view of life in his first education. To begin with, I had made up my mind to grant him everything he wanted, from the conviction that the first impulses of nature are always good and wholesome; but I was not long in recognizing that if children were to establish for themselves the right to be obeyed, they would depart from

1 L'amour propre.

the state of nature almost at birth, and would acquire the adult vices from our example, and their own vices from our indiscretion. I saw that if I tried to satisfy all his whims, they would increase with my complacency, and that a time would always come when it would be necessary to stop, and then he would feel the refusal all the more keenly because he was so little accustomed to it. Since, then, I could not save him from every vexation before the age of reason, I preferred him to have those that were slightest and soonest past. To make him suffer as little as possible from a refusal, I began by making him accustomed to refusals; and to spare him long-continued fretting and rebellion, I made every refusal irrevocable. I refuse him as rarely as possible, it is true, and never without due consideration. Whatever is granted him is granted unconditionally on the first request, and considerable indulgence is shown. But he never gets anything by importunity: tears and coaxings are equally futile. So convinced is he of this that he has ceased to make use of them. At the first word he accepts his lot, and grieves no more on seeing a box of sweets closed that he wanted to eat than on seeing a bird he would like to keep fly away: he feels it is just as impossible for him to get the one as the other. A thing that has been taken away from him only appears to him something he is not able to keep, and a thing refused to him only means something he is not able to get. He would no more think of striking a person who resisted him than of striking the table on which he has hurt himself. In all that offends him, he feels the law of necessity: it is the effect of his own weakness, and never due to the bad will of others. . . . Just a moment," she said quickly, seeing I was about to reply. "I foresee your objection and am coming to it immediately.

"The thing that encourages children to bawl is the attention paid to them, either in yielding to them or in opposing them. Generally a whole day's weeping is enough to show them that we do not want them to weep. Whether flattery or threats be used, the means taken to make them quiet are always pernicious and

nearly always ineffective. So long as we are concerned about their weeping, they have a reason for going on, but they soon stop crying when they see no attention being paid to them; for, child or man, no one likes to take needless trouble. This is just what happened with my eldest boy. At first he was a noisy little bawler; but now, as you yourself have seen, he makes no more noise in the house than if he were not in it. He cries when he is in pain: that is the voice of nature and should never be restrained. But the moment he ceases to suffer, he stops crying. For this reason I pay very careful attention to his weeping, since I am quite sure that he never cries idly; and in this way I have the advantage of knowing immediately when he feels pain and when he does not, when he is well and when he is sick—an advantage that is lost when children weep capriciously for the purpose of being appeased. At the same time I must admit that it is not easy to get nurses and governesses to see the force of this; for nothing is more annoying than to hear a child always crying, and these good women think only of the present, forgetting that a child made quiet today will only weep the more to-morrow. The worst of it is that ill-timed indulgence makes the child headstrong when he grows up. The same cause that makes him a bawler at three makes him refractory at twelve, quarrelsome at twenty, imperious at thirty, and unbearable his whole life through.

"I come now to your objection," said she to me with a smile. "When we grant children any favours, they can easily see that we desire their good; and so when we make some demand on them or give them a refusal, they ought to take it for granted that we have reasons for it without asking what they are. This is another advantage gained by using authority rather than persuasion on every necessary occasion; for, since it is impossible for them not to see the reason for our treatment of them sometimes, it is natural for them to take it for granted even when they are unable to see it. On the contrary, as soon as we submit anything to their judgment, they take it upon themselves to pass judgment on everything,

and become sophistical and insincere, ready with quibbles, and always on the outlook for a chance to silence those who are weak enough to expose themselves to their petty wit. Whenever we are obliged to explain things beyond their comprehension, they attribute the most prudent conduct to caprice immediately it is above their level. In a word, the only way to make them amenable to reason is not to reason with them at all, but to impress upon them that reason is beyond their years; for then they take it for granted that it is on the side where it ought to be, unless we give them cause to think otherwise. Once they are sure we love them, they know we do not want to do them hurt: children rarely err in that. Consequently, when I refuse anything to my children, I never argue with them. Instead of telling them why I refuse, I act in such a way that they understand it as far as they can. In this way they get to understand that I never refuse them anything without good reason, though they cannot always see what the reason is.

"On the same principle, I do not permit my children to take part in the conversation of grown-up people, or let them be foolish enough to imagine that they are holding their own in a company, because their silly babbling is permitted. I want them to reply modestly and in a few words when they are questioned, but never to take it upon themselves to speak, or to worry people older than themselves with untimely questions."

"Really, Julie," I said, interrupting her, "for such a tender mother your system is very rigorous. Pythagoras himself was not more severe with his disciples. Not only do you not treat them like men, but it looks as if you were afraid that they would cease to be children too soon. How can they learn more surely and agreeably than by addressing questions to people wiser than themselves on the subjects about which they are ignorant? I wonder what the Parisian ladies, who believe that their children cannot chatter too soon or too much, and who judge of their future wit by the foolish sayings of their childhood, would think of your maxims. Wolmar will say that that may be right enough in a country where it is the supreme

distinction to be a good chatterer, and where no one needs to think provided he can speak. But how can you, who wish to make your children's lot very happy, reconcile that with so much restraint? What comes of the liberty you pretend to leave them, if you impose so many restrictions?"

"Do you think," said she at once, "that it is a restriction on their liberty to prevent them trespassing on ours? Would they not be happy unless a whole company was silently admiring their puerilities? The best way to bring them happiness is to prevent their vanity springing up, or at least to arrest its progress; for man's vanity is the source of his greatest miseries, and even to those who attain greatness and honour it brings more pain than pleasure.

"What can a child think of himself when he sees a circle of sensible people all listening to his words, admiring him, awaiting with unrestrained eagerness the oracles that proceed from his lips, and breaking into raptures of joy at every impertinence he utters? It would take a man all his time to keep a level head with all that false applause: judge the effect it must have on a child. The babbling of children is not unlike the predictions in almanacs: among a multitude of empty words it would indeed be a marvel if there never chanced to be a lucky hit. Imagine, then, the effect of such flattery on a simple mother already too prone to be misled by her own heart, and on the child who does not know what he is saying and finds himself famous. Do not think that I am proof against this error, because I know it to be an error! No, I see the mistake, and I fall into it. But at any rate, even if I do admire my son's repartees, I admire them in secret. It is not from my applause that he will learn to be a vain babbler: and the flatterers will not have the satisfaction of laughing at my weakness by getting me to repeat his remarks.

"One day, when we had visitors, and I had gone out to give some orders, I found four or five great boobies busy playing with him on my return. They began to tell me in the most serious air about the many pretty

things he had been saying, and seemed to be very much amazed. 'Gentleman,' said I to them coldly, 'I do not doubt that you can make puppets say very pretty things; but I hope that my children will one day be men, and be able to act and to talk as men should. When that time comes I shall always be glad to hear of anything good they have said or done.' Seeing that this way of paying court was not acceptable, they now play with my children as if they were children and not marionettes. They no longer treat them as equals; and the children are appreciably better since this admiration has come to an end.

"I do not forbid questions altogether. I am the first to tell them to ask politely what they want to know, especially from their father or myself. But I do not permit them to break into a serious conversation and monopolize attention with the first impertinent expression that comes into their head. The art of asking questions is not so easy as is generally thought: it is the master's art rather than the scholar's. A man requires to have learned a great many things before he is able to enquire about what he does not know. 'The wise man knows and enquires,' says an Indian proverb, 'but the ignorant man does not even know what to enquire about.' For lack of the necessary knowledge, children left free to ask what they will, rarely ask any but foolish questions which lead nowhere, or difficult and awkward questions of which the answer is beyond their comprehension. Seeing, then, that they do not need to know everything, there is no reason for granting them the right to ask about everything. This is why they generally learn more from questions put to them than from those which they themselves ask.

"But even if the asking of questions were as useful as it is generally believed to be, the first and most important thing for them to learn is discretion and modesty: no other knowledge should be acquired at the expense of that. What is the good of children having freedom of speech before the age of speech, and the chance of compelling people to answer their blatant questions? The

little chattering questioners ask questions not so much for the purpose of learning as to force people to attend to them; and their pleasure in this babbling is all the greater when they see the embarrassment created by their indiscreet questions, with the result that everyone is uneasy when they open their mouths. Instead of instructing them, this liberty only makes them vain and foolish—an inconvenience which, in my opinion, much exceeds the advantage they gain from it. For ignorance gradually diminishes, but vanity always goes on increasing.

"The worst that can result from keeping up this reserve too long will be that my son will not be quite so apt in conversation or so fluent in speech when he reaches the age of reason; but considering how much the mind is narrowed by the habit of always saying things that are not worth saying, this fortunate sterility seems to me a good rather than an evil. You need not be afraid that an intelligent man who refrains from talking because of his modesty and discretion will ever be taken for a fool. There is no country where people judge a man by what he has not said and despise him for being silent. On the contrary, you will generally notice that silent people make an impression. Others like to speak in their presence and pay careful attention to what they say. This puts all the advantage on their side by giving them choice of the occasions for speech, and ensures that nothing they say will be overlooked. It is so difficult for even the wisest man to keep his presence of mind perfectly during a long flow of words and to avoid saying something that he does not repent at leisure, that he generally prefers to hold back the good rather than risk the bad.

"But there is a great difference between a person of six and one of twenty. My son will not always be a child; and once his reason makes its appearance, his father intends to let it be exercised according to the stage of its development. So far as I am concerned, my work does not go as far as that. I nurse the children, but I do not presume to aim at making men of them.

I hope," said she, looking at her husband, "that someone more worthy will undertake that noble task. I am a woman and a mother, and I can keep my proper place. Once again let me say: the duty that falls to me is not to educate my sons but to prepare them for being educated.

"Even in that I only follow M. de Wolmar's system in every detail; and the further I proceed the better I realize its excellence, and the more I find it in agreement with my own. Look at our children, and especially at our eldest boy. I am sure you have never seen children more happy and cheerful, and less troublesome. You see them frisk and laugh and run about all day long without giving the least trouble to anyone. They enjoy every pleasure and every liberty which their age permits, without abusing them. They are under no more constraint in my presence than when I am away from them. On the contrary, they have always a little more confidence under their mother's eyes than at any other time; and though I am responsible for all the severity they experience, they find no one less severe than I, for I could not endure the thought of them not loving me more than anyone else in the world.

"The only laws imposed on them when they are with us are the laws of liberty itself: namely, that they are not to put any more constraint on the company than the company puts on them; that they are not to cry louder than we are talking; and that, since they are not obliged to concern themselves with what we are doing, they are not to demand any special attention from us. If they transgress these just laws, their sole punishment is to be sent away at once, and that is only a punishment because my whole art (if it really is an art at all) is to contrive to make them happier in my company than anywhere else. Except for these restrictions, they are never put under any restraint. They are never compelled to learn anything: they are never troubled with needless corrections: they are never reprimanded. The only lessons they get are the practical lessons acquired in the simplicity of nature. Everyone in the house, being well

instructed in the matter, falls in with my wishes with an intelligence and care that leaves nothing to be desired; and if any defect arises, I am careful to anticipate it, or to remove it. Yesterday, for example, the older boy took a drum from the younger and made him cry. Fanny said nothing to him at the time, but an hour later, when he was at the height of his enjoyment, she took it away from him. He followed her about, demanding it back, and weeping in his turn. 'You took it from your brother by force,' said she, 'and I am taking it from you in the same way, since I am stronger than you.' Then she began to beat the drum in the same way as he did, as if she took great pleasure in it. Up to this point everything had been done perfectly, but some time later, she wanted to give back the drum to the younger boy. Then I stopped her, for that was contrary to the teaching of nature, and might create the first feeling of bitterness between the two brothers. The younger boy in losing the drum came under the hard law of necessity; the older boy realized his own injustice; and both felt their weakness, and were consoled immediately after."

At first the novelty of the plan and its departure from accepted ideas provoked opposition in me. But at length, by dint of explanation, they made me a warm admirer of it, and led me to see that the course of nature[1] is always the best for the guidance of mankind. The only drawback I saw to the method—and it seemed to me a very serious one—was that it neglected the one faculty that is perfectly developed in children but grows feebler with advancing years. It seemed to me that, on their own view of education, the weaker and more inadequate the operations of the understanding are, the more the memory ought to be exercised and strengthened, seeing that it is quite fit to stand the strain of effort at this stage. "It is memory," I contended, "that ought to take the place of reason till it makes it appearance, and supply it with material when it does appear.

1 La marche de la nature. Cf. *Emile,* Preface: "à l'égard de ce qu'on appellera la partie systématique qui n'est autre chose ici que la marche de la nature. . ."

A mind that has nothing on which to exercise itself becomes dull and stupid from inaction. The seed does not take root in a badly prepared soil; and to begin by being stupid is a strange preparation for learning to be reasonable." "What do you mean by 'stupid'?" cried Madame de Wolmar immediately. "Surely you are confounding the two different, almost contrary, faculties of memory and judgment:[1] as if it would not do more harm than good to the reason to fill a head that was still feeble with a mass of badly digested and unconnected facts! I admit that of all the human faculties, memory is the first to develop and the easiest to cultivate in children; but which do you think should be preferred—that which is easiest for them to learn, or that which is most important for them to know?

"Consider the use to which this aptitude for memorizing is put, and the constant restraint they have to endure to get their memories turned into showrooms; then compare the advantage they get with the evil they have to suffer in getting it. Why should a child be forced to learn languages he will never speak, even before he has learned his own? Why should he be forced to go on repeating and making unmeaning verses, when all the harmony they have for him is at the end of his fingers; or to perplex himself about circles and spheres of which he has no real idea; or to be plagued with the names of countless towns and rivers which he is constantly confusing, and which have to be learned afresh every day? That surely is not cultivating the memory to the profit of the judgment. Such futile learning is not worth a single one of the tears it costs.

"I should not complain so much if all this were simply useless; but it is worse than useless to teach a child to be satisfied with mere words, and to think he knows what is really beyond his understanding. Such a mass of stuff cannot but be inimical to the first ideas with which the child's head is to be furnished. Indeed, it would be far

1 This, I think, is wrong. Nothing is so necessary for judgment as memory; though, of course, not the memory of words. (*Note by Rousseau.*)

better to have no memory at all than to fill it with all this rubbish to the prejudice of the necessary information it displaces.

"If nature has given children's brains the plasticity which enables them to receive all kinds of impressions, it is certainly not for the purpose of getting engraved on them the names of kings, dates, terms relating to heraldry, the sphere and geography, and all the other words without meaning at their age, and of no use at any age, with which their joyless barren childhood is plagued. It is to enable all the ideas relating to man's estate, those that affect his wellbeing and throw light on his duties, to be traced there in ineffaceable characters while they are still young, to help to guide them through life in a manner becoming their nature and their faculties.

"A child's memory does not remain idle even if he does not pore over books. Everything he sees and hears attracts his attention, and he remembers it. He keeps within himself a record of the speech and action of the people around him; and his whole environment is the book from which, without thinking anything about it, he is continually enriching his memory against the time when his judgment can profit by it. It is in the choice of these objects, and in the care taken to bring constantly before him those he ought to know, and to hide from him those of which he ought to be ignorant, that the real art of cultivating the first of his faculties consists. It is by these means that we should try to form for him a storehouse of information that will serve for his education during youth and for his conduct all through life. This method, it is true, does not turn out little prodigies, and gives governesses and tutors no chance of making a fine show; but it produces judicious sturdy men, healthy in body and mind, who make themselves honoured when grown up, even if they do not win admiration in their youth.[1]

1 Cf. *Emile, II.*, where these paragraphs are reproduced almost verbatim.

"You must not think, however," continued Julie, "that we entirely neglect those attentions you consider so important. With a little vigilance a mother holds the passions of her children in her hands. There are methods of stimulating and encouraging the desire to learn or to do any particular thing; and so far as these methods are compatible with the most complete liberty on the part of the child, and do not engender any seeds of vice in him, I employ them readily enough, without persevering in them obstinately when they do not meet with success; for there is always time enough for learning, but not a moment to lose for forming a good disposition. M. de Wolmar's views on the first development of reason, indeed, lead him to maintain that, quite apart from the fact that nothing is less necessary than for a man to be a scholar, and nothing more necessary than for him to be wise and good, his son would not be less well instructed at fifteen even if he knew nothing whatever at twelve.

"Our eldest boy, as you know, already reads fairly well. Here is how the desire to learn came to him. I had formed the plan of telling him from time to time some fable from La Fontaine, for the purpose of amusing him, and had already made a start with it, when one day he asked me whether crows spoke. Immediately I saw the difficulty of making him sensible of the difference between fable and falsehood. I got out of the undertaking as well as I could; and being convinced that fables are intended for men, but that children should always be told the literal truth, I gave up La Fontaine. In his place I put a collection of short stories of an interesting and instructive kind, most of them drawn from the Bible. Then, finding that the child liked my tales, it occurred to me that I could make them still more useful for him, and I tried to compose some myself, making them as amusing as possible, and always applicable to the needs of the moment. I wrote them out nicely in a beautiful book adorned with pictures, which I kept carefully locked up; and from this book I read stories to him from time to time—not very often,

indeed, and not long at a time—repeating the same story many times, with comments, before passing on to new ones. A child with nothing to do finds time hang heavy on his hands, and the little stories met a want. But sometimes when I saw him attending most eagerly, I remembered an order I had to give and went away at the most interesting point, leaving the book behind me with seeming negligence. Immediately he went to his nurse, or to Fanny, or to someone else, begging them to finish it for him; but as nobody was at his command, he was frequently refused, as I had foreseen. One person would not do it, another was busy, another muttered slowly and badly, while a fourth followed my example and stopped in the middle. When it was evident that he has weary of so much dependence, someone suggested to him secretly that he should learn to read so as not to need help from anyone, and be able to read the book at his pleasure. He liked the idea; but where was he to find people obliging enough to give him lessons? This was a new difficulty, which, however, we did not push any further than was necessary. In spite of all precautions, he grew tired of learning, three or four times. Of this I took no notice beyond trying to make my stories still more amusing, which brought him again to the charge with so much ardour that, though it is not six months altogether since he began to learn, he will soon be able to read the collection without any help.

"It is much in this way that I intend to excite his zeal and inclination in acquiring the kinds of knowledge suited to his years that call for sustained attention and application. But though he is learning to read, it is not from books that he will get this knowledge. Apart from the fact that it is not to be found in books, the book method of learning is quite unsuitable for children. Moreover, I wish to accustom him from an early age to fill his head with ideas and not with words. That is why I never make him learn anything by heart."

"Never!" I interrupted. "That is saying a good deal. Surely it is necessary for him to know his catechism and

his prayers." "That is where you are wrong," she replied. "I say my own prayers aloud in the children's room every morning and evening. I am quite satisfied that they should learn them in this way without any compulsion. So far as the catechism is concerned, they do not even know what it is." "Do you really mean, Julie, that your children do not learn their catechism?" "No, my friend, my children do not learn their catechism." "Really," said I, quite astonished, "how so pious a mother . . . I do not understand you. And why do your children not learn their catechism?" "I want them to believe it later on," she said. "I wish to make Christians of them some day." "Ah!" I cried, "I see your idea. You do not want their faith to consist in mere words. You want them to believe in their religion as well as know it; and you think (rightly enough) that it is impossible for a man to believe in what he does not understand." "You state the case very precisely," said M. de Wolmar with a smile. "Are you, perchance, a Christian yourself?" "I endeavor to be so," said I with firmness. "In the matter of religion, I believe all that I can comprehend, and respect the rest without rejecting it." Julie made me a sign of approbation, and we resumed the subject of conversation.

After entering into other details which enabled me to realize how indefatigable and full of forethought is the zeal of a mother, she concluded by observing that her method exactly answered the two objects she had set herself to accomplish: it permitted the natural disposition of her children to develop, and it gave her the opportunity of studying it. "My children are not restricted in any way, and cannot abuse their liberty. Their characters can neither be corrupted nor become unnatural. Their bodies are left to grow strong and their judgments allowed to ripen at leisure. Subjection does not degrade their souls, nor flattery excite conceit in them. They do not think of themselves either as strong men or as chained animals, but simply as free and happy children. To preserve them from vices foreign to their nature they have a better safeguard than discourses beyond

their understanding, in the moral tone of their whole environment. By way of example, there are the conversations they hear—and in the case of all the people here these are quite natural, and do not need to be modified in their presence; there is the peace and good feeling of which they are witnesses; there is the constant harmony they see prevailing, alike in the general behaviour and in the conduct and speech of every one.

"Whence would children who have been brought up in this way in their first simplicity, acquire the vices they have never seen, the passions they have had no occasion to feel, the prejudices that nothing inspires in them? As you see, no error gets near them, and no evil inclination shows itself in them. Their ignorance is not opinionated, their desires are not headstrong. Their evil propensities are prevented, nature is justified, and everything proves to me that the defects which we lay to her charge are not her work but our own.

"Thus it comes that our children, being left to the promptings of their own heart without needing to disguise or change them, do not acquire a form that is merely external and artificial, but retain the exact form of their original character. And so this character unfolds itself before our eyes from day to day without reserve, and we are able to study the movements of nature in their most secret beginnings. Since they are sure of never being scolded or punished, they know nothing of lying or dissimulation; and in all they say, either when they are by themselves, or in our company, they reveal with perfect frankness all that is in their inmost soul. They are left free to chatter to each other all day long, and they never even think of checking themselves for a moment in my presence. I never find fault with them or make them keep quiet or even appear to hear what they are saying. They might say the most reprehensible things possible, and I should pretend to know nothing about it. But as a matter of fact, though they do not suspect it, I pay the closest attention, and keep an exact record of their sayings and doings, since these are the natural products of the soil that is to be cultivated.

A vicious word in their mouths is a foreign weed implanted there as a wind-borne seed. If I cut it down with a reprimand, it will soon shoot up again. Instead of that, I secretly look for its root and carefully pull it out. I am only the servant of the gardener," said she to me with a smile. "I weed the garden and remove the bad plants; it is his part to cultivate the good ones.

"It must be admitted, also, that with all the pains I may have taken, I required good backing to have any hope of success, and that the happy result of my labours has depended on a concourse of circumstances which perhaps has never existed anywhere else but here. It needed the insight of a wise father to discern through the current prejudices the true art of educating children from their birth. It needed all his patience to carry through the plan without contradicting his lessons by his conduct. It needed well-born children in whom the unaided work of nature was worthy of love. It needed a company of intelligent and well-disposed servants, sparing no pains to enter into the views of their master and mistress: a single brutal or time-serving valet would have been enough to ruin everything. Indeed, when we think how many adventitious circumstances can spoil the finest plans and bring to naught the best-laid schemes, we have cause to be thankful for all the good we can do in this life, and to admit that wise action depends largely on good fortune."

"Say rather that good fortune depends on wise action," said I. "Do you not see that this combination of happy circumstances on which you congratulate yourself is your own work, and that all who come near you are compelled to be like you? Mothers of families, when you complain that you are not getting the help you should, how little you know your own power! Be all that you ought to be and the difficulties will vanish before you. You will force everyone to do his duty, if you will but do your own. Your rights are the rights of nature; and in spite of vicious maxims, they will always be dear to every human soul. Seek to be women and mothers, and the sweetest dominion on earth will also be the one most respected."

At the end of our conversation, Julie remarked that everything had become much easier after the adoption of Henriette. "I should certainly have needed much less care and attention in my task," she said, "if I had been willing to introduce the spirit of emulation between the two brothers. But this seemed to me too dangerous a method to employ. I would rather take more trouble and run no risks. Henriette has made up for the lack of emulation. Since she is of a different sex and older than the boys, and since both of them love her devotedly and she has good sense beyond her years, I make her, so to speak, their first governess, and with all the greater success that the lessons she teaches are not suspected to be lessons. As for Henriette herself, her education is my special concern; but the principles on which it is being carried out are so different that they deserve a conversation to themselves."

Memoir on the Education of the Prince of Wirtemberg's Infant Daughter, Sophie (1763)

[Within a year or two of the publication of the *Emile* in 1762, little Emiles and little Sophies were being educated all over Europe on the models set in that work. This *Memoir* is one of a number of letters written by Rousseau giving advice about the education of these little ones. The father, Prince Louis Eugène of Wirtemberg, had been led by his enthusiasm for Rousseau's ideas to renounce the fashions of the court in order to live as simple a life as his station permitted. When his daughter was born, he resolved to bring her up by the method of the *Emile,* but found it difficult to adapt its principles to his own circumstances. He wrote to Rousseau asking his help, and Rousseau, who dearly loved a lord in spite of his social theories, agreed to answer any questions he might ask on the subject of her education. The Prince in reply gave him full details about his daughter—his notes, so far as I know, are the first record of child study of the modern kind—and stated his problem. "A matter of very great importance, which I have often discussed with M. Tissot [a doctor and friend, also an admirer of Rousseau], and which has perplexed us both very much, is that I am surrounded by a very considerable number of servants. If my position allowed me to isolate my child, I should have less difficulty, for I should follow you, point by point, but so far as I can see the great difficulty is to avoid

departing from your wise plan in circumstances completely different from those you have chosen." The *Memoir* is Rousseau's attempt to solve the problem.]

If I had the misfortune to have been born a prince and to be enslaved by the conventions of my station, and yet had a soul sufficiently elevated to desire to be a man notwithstanding my rank, and fulfil the great duties of husband, father, and citizen of the world, it would not be long before I was conscious of the difficulties of reconciling the two things, and more particularly the difficulty of educating my children for the state in which nature placed them, in spite of that which they hold among their peers.

In that case, I should begin by saying to myself: 'It is no use desiring contradictory things. One cannot be in a position and not be in it. The difficulty I wish to overcome is inherent in the situation itself, and if it cannot be changed then the difficulty must remain. I must make up my mind that I shall not get all that I want, but that is no reason for being discouraged. I shall follow the ideal course as far as possible. It is the part of the wise man to bear the yoke of necessity. When he has done all that is in his power, he has done everything.' This is what I should say to myself if I were a prince, and after that I should proceed without being disheartened or afraid. Having done so, I should be satisfied with myself whatever my success, and I do not think I should be wrong in this.

You must begin, my lord, by keeping clearly before your mind that it is only a father who can give a father's care, and only a mother who can give a mother's care. I should like to fill twenty reams of paper repeating these two lines, so strongly am I convinced that everything depends on them.

You are a prince. You will have so many duties to perform that you will rarely be able to do your duty as a

father. Other people must therefore do it for you. The duchess will be in almost the same position.

From this follows the First Rule: *Make sure that your child is dear to someone.*

It is best that this one should be of her own sex. The age presents considerable difficulty. There are strong reasons for her being young. But a young person has other things to think about than watching over a child day and night. This drawback is inevitable and conclusive.

So then, do not get a young woman, nor, consequently, a beautiful one: that would be still worse. If young, it is only herself you will need to fear; if beautiful, everyone that comes near her.

It is better that she should be a widow than a maid. But if she have children, let none of them be beside her, and let them all be dependent on you.

Do not get a person with lofty sentiments, and still less a clever woman. She should have just enough intelligence to understand you properly, without improving on your instructions.

It is important that she should not be too easy-going, and not important that she should be open-handed. On the other hand, she must be steady, and mindful of her own interests. It is impossible to subject a lavish person to rule, whereas avaricious people are held in check by their very defect.

She should not be giddy or light-headed. Apart from the actual evil of the thing, there is also the evil of the disposition it indicates; for all fools have it, and there is no disposition more to be dreaded. For the same reason, vivacious people, though more amiable, are always suspect because of their rashness. As we shall not find a perfect woman, we must not ask too much. In this particular case, gentleness is essential; but so long as reason makes her gentle, she need not be gentle by temperament. I would much rather have her even-tempered and cold than effusive and capricious. In all cases, prefer a stable character to a brilliant one. For our purpose, brilliance is even a drawback. A child who is destined to

be superior to others may be spoiled by the merits of her educators. She demands thereafter the same excellence from everybody, and that makes her unjust to her inferiors.

Do not look for any culture of mind in the governess. All that studies do is to give a veneer: the real woman will be disguised by any knowledge she has. You will know far better what she is if she is ignorant. Should she be unable to read, so much the better: she will learn along with her pupil. The only quality of mind that is imperative is good sense.

I do not speak here of the qualities of heart, nor of morals (which are taken for granted), because they may be counterfeit. People are not so guarded in the rest of their character, and from this a man of insight judges everything. All this would call for greater detail; but that is not to the point at present.

I say—and it is my First Rule—that the child must be dear to this person. How is this to be secured?

You will not make her love the child merely by telling her to do so. That is not possible before habit has caused attachment to spring up. People sometimes find amusement in other people's children, but it is only their own that they love.

She might love the child if she loved the father or the mother. But people of your rank have no friends; indeed, dependents are never friends in any rank.

Now, if affection does not spring from sentiment, it can only come from self-interest.

At this point comes the reflection confirmed by many other considerations, that the difficulties which are inevitable for a man of your rank can only be eluded at a great price.

But do not think as others do that money by itself does everything, and that you can get service simply by paying for it. That is not the case.

I know nothing more difficult than for a rich man to make use of his riches for the attainment of his ends. Money is the driving power of the machinery of conduct,

but it always recoils on the hand that makes use of it. Let us now make some observations necessary for our purpose.

We want the child to be dear to her governess. For that, the lot of the governess must be bound up with that of the child. She must not be paid simply for the services she renders the child, not only because one does not love very much the person one serves, but because services paid for are only apparent. The real services are neglected; and it is real services we seek.

She must depend not on her services but on their success: her own fortunes must be connected with the result of the education she has given. Only then will she see herself in her pupil and become attached to her by necessity. Only then will she render her pupil, not eye-service but real service. Or, rather, in serving her, she will be serving herself and working for herself.

But who is to be the judge of her success? The good faith of a just father of recognized probity ought to be a sufficient guarantee that she will get her reward. Probity is a trusty instrument in business matters, provided it is combined with discernment.

The father, however, may die. Feminine judgment is admittedly not reliable enough, and maternal love is blind. If the mother were appointed judge in default of the father, either the governess would not trust her or she would be more concerned about pleasing the mother than about bringing up the child properly.

I shall not say any more about the choice of the judges of the child's education. For that I should need to have detailed information of a personal kind. The essential thing is that the governess should have perfect confidence in the integrity of the judgment, and be convinced that she will not be deprived of the reward of her labours in the event of success, or get it (whatever she may say) in the contrary event. She must never forget that her reward is not to depend on her efforts but on her success.

Just as reason alone has little power, so self-interest by itself is less effective than is commonly believed. It is only the imagination that is active. We want to give the

governess a passion, and the passions are excited by the imagination. The promise of a monetary reward is very potent, but it loses half its effect if it is in the far distance. On a calm comparison between the time and the money, the risk is set against the fortune and the heart remains unmoved. Bring the future, so to speak, under the senses so as to give it more hold. Present it under those aspects that bring it near, that flatter hope and beguile the mind.

If, for example, I am dealing with a person of a peaceable temper of mind, fond of independence and of a quiet life, I take her for a walk in some country spot. She sees in a pretty situation a well-furnished little house, with a poultry yard, a garden, grounds sufficient to provide a livelihood for the owner, all the amenities that make a desirable residence. I see my governess enchanted. At the height of her enthusiasm I take her apart and say to her: 'Bring up my daughter to my mind, and all that you see is yours.' And to keep her from thinking that these are empty words, I make a conditional agreement. She will not have a single distaste in the course of her duties to which her imagination will not apply this house as a salve.

This, be it noted, is only an example.

If the length of time exhausts and wearies the imagination, the task and the recompense may be shared out into several parts, and even among several persons. I see no difficulty or inconvenience in that. If in six years my child is so and so, you will have this or that for reward. When the period comes to an end, the bargain is kept if the conditions have been fulfilled, and both parties are free.

The expedient I have suggested has many other advantages, but there is no call for me to mention them all. The child will love her governess, especially if she begins by being severe, and the child has not yet been spoiled. The effect of habit is natural and sure: save by the fault of those in charge, it never fails. Moreover, justice has its measure and its exact rule, while complacency, having no law, makes children always exacting and discontented.

The child, then, who loves her maid, is aware that the lot of this maid depends on the success of her work. Judge from this how the child will behave as her intelligence and heart become formed.

When the little girl reaches a certain age, she becomes capricious or headstrong. Let us suppose a critical moment has come, a moment of great importance, when she refuses to listen to anything that is said to her. It is obvious that such a time will come very rarely. At this awkward moment every resource fails the maid. Looking at her pupil, she bursts into tears and says: 'It's all over now. You are taking from me the bread of my old age!'

I assume that the daughter of a father like yourself is not a monster. That being so, the effect of this remark is certain. At the same time, it is not a remark to be repeated.

The little girl may be got to say it to herself constantly: this would be of advantage in a great many ways. In any case, do you think a woman who is able to speak to her pupil in this fashion will not take an interest in her? It is natural for us to be fond of people whose character we have formed, and no less natural to be interested in our own work, especially when we look to it for our well-being. Here, then, is our first requirement satisfied.

Second Rule.—*The governess must have her line of action all marked out for her, and have perfect confidence in its success.*

The Memoir of instructions that must be put in her hands is a very important document, and she should study it unceasingly. She must know it by heart, better than an ambassador needs to know his orders. It is still more important that she should be perfectly convinced that there is no other road to the goal that has been marked out for her, and consequently to her own goal.

That does not mean that she should get the Memoir straight away. You must begin by telling her what you want, and showing her the condition of body and soul you expect her to cultivate in your child. On that score, any dispute or objection on her part is futile. You do not require to give her reasons for what you wish. But she should have it proved to her that the plan is feasible, and

that the method you propose is the only possible one. This method you should discuss with her at length, telling her your reasons clearly, simply, and fully, in terms that she can understand. You must listen to her replies, her notions, her objections, and talk over them in a leisurely way, not so much for the sake of the objections themselves, which will probably be superficial, as to get the opportunity to become acquainted with her mind, and to convince her thoroughly that the methods you indicate are the only ones that will bring success. You must make sure that she is convinced on every point, not merely in words but in her heart. Only then should you give her the Memoir, reading it with her, examining it, explaining it, perhaps correcting it, and making sure that she understands it perfectly.

Unforeseen circumstances will often occur in the course of the child's education. Sometimes the prescribed course will not turn out as expected. The factors in a moral problem are very numerous, and the omission of a single one makes the solution false. This will necessitate frequent conferences, discussions, and explanations, which should never be refused. They should even be made agreeable to the governess by your readiness to make yourself available for them. This is another excellent way of studying the governess herself.

These details seem to me to be the special concern of the mother. She ought to know the Memoir as well as the governess, but in a different way. The governess will know the rules: the mother will know the principles. In the first place, having had a more careful education and had her mind better trained, she should be more fit to generalize her ideas and see all their relations; and further, since she has a much keener interest in the success of the scheme, she ought to take more thought about the means needed to attain success.

Third Rule.—*The governess ought to have absolute control of the child.*

Rightly understood, what this rule amounts to is that the Memoir alone should regulate everything; for obviously, if everyone scrupulously bases his conduct on the Memoir there will always be harmonious action, except

when there is ignorance on the part of some persons or other; and it is easy enough to provide against that.

I have not lost sight of my object, but I have been compelled to make a very wide detour. As a matter of fact, most of the difficulty has been removed already, for our pupil will have little to fear from servants, with her second mother so much interested in looking after her. Let us now speak of the servants.

In a well-ordered house there are some general means for getting things done, without which nothing can ever be attained.

First, there are the morals of the house, the impressive image of virtue before which everything bows, not excepting vice itself; then there is order and watchfulness; and, last of all, self-interest. I would add vanity, were it not that the condition of servants is too near poverty, and vanity only exercises its power over well-to-do people.

To avoid repetition, permit me to refer you, my lord, to the tenth letter in the Fourth Part of the *New Heloïse*. There you will find a collection of maxims that seem to me essential to make authority effective in any house, whether large or small. At the same time, I recognize the difficulty of putting them into practice, for, of all conceivable classes of men, valets are least easily got to do what one wants them to do. But all the talking in the world will not alter facts: valets will always be valets.

The retinue of a great lord is capable of being increased or decreased without ceasing to be adequate. I set out from that fact in laying down my first maxim.

1. Reduce your suite to the smallest possible number. You will have fewer enemies, and you will be better served. If there is a single man who is not needed in your household you may be sure that he will be a source of mischief.

2. In choosing those you will keep, think more of careful service than of the service that pleases. The people who are smooth-faced in presence of their master are all rogues. Above all, don't have any evil-living men.

3. Insist on the rule in everything, even in their work, that what they do is to be worth doing.

4. Give them good reason for remaining a long time in your service, and for becoming more and more attached to it, so that the longer they remain in it the more they will be afraid to leave it. The reason for this and the means to secure it are to be found in the book to which I have referred.

These are conditions that I may assume; for though they call for considerable effort they depend in the last resort on yourself. We will take them for granted.

Some time before speaking to the servants, you have occasional conversations at table about the education of your child, and you speak of what you intend to do, the difficulties you will have to overcome, and your firm resolve to spare no pains to ensure success. Probably your retainers have not failed to criticize among themselves the extraordinary method you are taking to educate your child. It will have seemed to them absurd. You must put this right, quite simply and in a few words, explaining your object in terms of morality and piety rather than of philosophy. The duchess, consulting only her own heart, may join in with some charming words, and M. Tissot may add some reflections worthy of himself.

It is so unusual for people of rank to show affection, or love virtue, or concern themselves about their children, that these conversations, if brief and well managed, cannot fail to produce a great effect. It is most important, however, that there should be no suggestion of affectation, and no lengthy speeches. Servants have quick eyes. Everything would be spoiled if they suspected that this was all made up; and indeed it ought not to be so. Good father and good mother, let your hearts speak with simplicity! They will find the right things to say of themselves. I see the servants behind your chairs prostrating themselves in their inmost hearts before their master. This is the attitude of mind that must be produced and turned to profit for the rules we have to prescribe to them.

These rules are of two kinds, according to your judgment on the condition of your household and the disposition of your retainers.

If you think you can repose in them a reasonable confidence, based on their self-interest, all that you need do is to make a brief, clear statement as to the way they are to behave at all times when near your child, so as not to interfere with her education.

But if, in spite of all your precautions, you think you cannot be sure about what they will say or do in her presence, the rule will be a simpler one—they are not to come near her on any pretext whatever.

Whichever course you elect to follow, there must be no exceptions to it. It must be the same for your retainers of every degree, excepting only those whom you tell off specially for the service of the child. The latter cannot be too few in number or too scrupulously chosen.

One day, then, you assemble your retainers, and, in a speech at once grave and simple, you tell them that you think it your duty, as a good father, to take care to educate properly the child whom God has given you. "Her mother and I are conscious of all that may do harm to our child. We want to save her from it; and, if God blesses our efforts, we shall not have to render account to Him for the defects or vices she may contract. With that in view, we must take great precautions. Here are those that concern you, and I hope you will give heed to them as honest folk, whose first duty is to help their master and mistress to do their duty."

After stating the rules they are to observe, you add that those who follow them carefully can reckon on your goodwill and your favours. "At the same time, I tell you," you go on in a louder voice, "that whoever fails even once and in any way whatever, will be discharged on the spot, and will lose his wages. As this is the condition on which I keep you, and of which I give you all due warning, those who are not willing to abide by it can go."

Rules involving so little constraint will drive away only those who would have gone away in any case. Perhaps at the beginning some thoughtless fellow will fall a victim to them, but there must be no leniency. Even if it be the major-domo, he must be dismissed as a rogue, or all is lost. But once they see that it is a serious business

and that they are being watched, there will forthwith be little need to watch them.

A great many minor precautions follow from these rules, but as this memoir is too long already, there is no need to detail them. I will only add a very important counsel concerning the checking of the evils that cannot be prevented. Always examine the child with the greatest care, and follow attentively her physical and her moral progress. If any breach of the rules has taken place about her, it will leave its impression on the child herself. As soon as you see signs of anything new, look carefully for the cause, and you will be sure to find it. At a certain age there is always a remedy for the evil that cannot be prevented, provided that one is able to recognize it and to take it in time to cure it.

All these expedients present difficulties, and I do not answer absolutely for their success. At the same time I think a reasonable confidence may be put in them, and I see nothing to take their place of which I can say as much.

In a road that is quite new it is useless to look for beaten paths. A venture so much out of the ordinary and so difficult cannot be carried through by easy and commonplace methods.

I would only add that what I have been saying may be only the ravings of a fevered brain. The comparison of the real and the ideal has given me a romantic mind, and has always put me at a distance from what is going on in the world. But you give your orders, my lord: I obey. It is my ideas you want: they are here. I should be cheating you if I gave you the wisdom of other people in place of my own follies. In submitting them to so good a judge as yourself, I am not afraid of them doing any harm.

Extracts from Three Letters to the Abbé M., who had undertaken the Education of a Boy by the Method of the *Emile* (1770)

[The letters to the Prince of Wirtemberg related to the education of an infant: these letters have reference to the education of an older child in the same rank of life. The main interest in the two cases is the same. They show how Rousseau tried to adapt the plan of the *Emile* to the special circumstances of actual life. The three extracts are from three successive letters.]

Pauvres aveugles que nous sommes!
Ciel! démasque les imposteurs,
Et force leur barbares cœurs
A s'ouvrir aux regards des hommes.[1]

I

Once there has been a departure from the straight path of nature, nothing is more difficult than to return to it. Your pupil has got a wrong bent that is all the harder to correct because everything around him is sure to hinder all your efforts at correction. It is usually the first wrong bent that children of quality acquire and the last that one can make them lose; to rid them of it requires the help of reason, which comes to them later than to other children. Do not be too much con-

1 This quatrain stands at the head of all three letters and most of the others written about this time. A further mark of eccentricity appears in the method of dating the letters. The first, e.g., is dated 17 9/2 70, meaning Feb. 9th, 1770.

cerned, therefore, if the result of your efforts does not at first answer to the warmth of your zeal. You should look for little success until you have gained the influence that can bring it; but that is no reason for slackness in the meantime. You are in a boat that is being dragged backwards by a very swift current. Much labour is needed to avoid going back.

The way you have taken, which you fear is not the best, will certainly not always be the best. But it appears to me the best in the meantime. There are only three instruments with which to act on human souls: reason, sentiment, and necessity. You have used the first to no purpose, and it is not likely that the second would have any more effect. There remains the third, and my advice is that for some time you should hold to it, the more so because the first and most important philosophy for man at every stage and time of life is to learn to bend to the yoke of necessity. *Clavos trabales et æneos manu gestans ahœna.*

It is evident that opinion, the monster that is the enemy of the human race, has already crammed the little fellow's head with its prejudices. He looks on you as a servant whom he has hired, a kind of domestic who should obey him and be complacent with his caprice; and in his little judgment it appears strange that one in your position should claim to subject him to your caprice (for it is in that light he sees all that you prescribe to him). All his conduct with respect to you follows directly from the maxim, which is not unjust, but which in this case is being misapplied, that the one who pays the piper should call the tune. On that principle, what does it matter whether he is right or wrong? He pays.

Attempt to displace this opinion as you go along by others more just, and to correct his errors by more sensible judgments. Try to make him understand that there are things of greater worth than birth and riches. To get him to understand that, you must not say it to him, but must make him realize it. Force his vain little soul to respect justice and courage and to bow before virtue. For that, do not go and look out books for him. The men in

books will never be anything but denizens of another world to him. I know of only one model who can put the reality before him, and that model is yourself, sir. The post you hold is in my eyes the greatest and the noblest in the world. Let mean people think what they will of it, I see you doing the work of God—making a man. If you see this as I see it, the idea must surely raise you not only in your own esteem, but in reality. And nothing less will suffice; for if you did not show yourself thus elevated, and only feigned virtue, the little fellow would see through you without fail, and all would be lost. But if the sublime image of worth and beauty in you once strikes him, if your disinterestedness shows him that wealth is not everything, if he sees from you how much greater it is to be the master of one's self than the master of valets—if, in a word, you force him to respect you—you will have conquered him from that moment; and I guarantee you that whatever he may pretend, he will no longer be indifferent as to whether you are in agreement with him or not. Most important of all, in forcing him to honour you in the depths of his young heart, you are tacitly insisting on him making light of what he himself thinks. It seems to me that with a certain grave and sustained fashion of exercising your authority over him, you will finally succeed in asking coldly in your turn "what it matters whether we are in agreement or not", and that, for his part, he will discover that it does matter. At the same time it will be necessary to avoid combining with this indifferent manner a harshness that would make you seem hateful. Without going into any explanation with him, you might remark to others in his presence: "I would have had great delight in making this child happy, but he has shown no wish for it; and I would rather have him unhappy as a child than contemptible as a man". With regard to punishments, I agree with you that there is no need to resort to blows, except in the single case when he has begun with blows himself. His chastisements should never be anything but deprivations, depending as far as possible on the nature of the offence. I would even have you, whenever pos-

sible, subject yourself to them along with him, doing so without showing what it costs you, and in such a way that, without you saying anything, he is able to read in your heart that you feel so much the privation you are imposing on him that you undergo it yourself without thinking of it. In a word, if you are to succeed, you must become almost impassive, and feel only because of your pupil, or for him. This, I admit, is a terrible task. But I see no other way to succeed. And this success seems to me assured in one way or another, for even if you have not the good fortune to make a man of him with all this care you will at least have become one yourself.

All this is said on the assumption that the supercilious scorn of the child is only the silly vanity of a petty greatness with which his maids have puffed up his little soul; but it might happen that it was the result of a proud, unconquerable character that will yield only to itself. It is not likely that your pupil has this kind of firmness, which is characteristic of strong natures, and is rarely found in the country in which you live. If, however, it should be so—and it is easy to tell—it would be very necessary to avoid following the method of meeting violence with violence, of which I have spoken. Woodworkers never employ iron on iron: the same principle holds good with those strong minds, which always resist force. There is only one way to influence them, but it is a sure and pleasant way—by means of attachment and goodwill. Like lions, they must be tamed by kindness. There is little chance of spoiling children of this kind. The essential thing is to get them to love you. After that, you may make them walk on red-hot irons.

II

If it is true that you have adopted the plan that I have tried to outline in the *Emile,* I admire your courage; for you have too much intelligence not to see that in such a system it must be all or nothing, and that it would be a hundred times better to go back to the methods of the ordinary educations, and make a little courtier, than to stop halfway in this one and make only

an abortive man. When I say "all", I do not mean that you should follow my ideas in a servile way; on the contrary, you will often need to correct them. The important thing is to lay hold of the principles and to follow out their consequences with exactness, making the modifications that every particular application demands. You cannot be ignorant of the immense task you are undertaking. For at least ten years you will have no life of your own, and will be wholly given up with all your faculties to your pupil. Vigilance, patience, and firmness, these are the three qualities in which you will not be able to relax for an instant, without the risk of losing everything—absolutely everything. One moment of impatience or negligence or forgetfulness may rob you of the fruit of six years' labour, without even the possibility of recovering it by the labour of ten more years. Assuredly, if there is anything that deserves the name of heroism and greatness, it is the success of enterprises like yours; for success is always proportionate to the expenditure of the talents and virtues with which it has been bought. At the same time, think on the gift you will have bestowed on your fellows, and the reward that you yourself will get for your great and painful labours. You will have made yourself a friend; for that is the necessary outcome of the respect, esteem, and gratitude with which you will have imbued your pupil. Look, sir; ten years of unremitting toil, and all the most satisfying pleasures in life for the rest of your days—and beyond that.

III

I come, sir, to the question about your pupil that you have submitted to me. My feeling is that a child should not be forced to eat anything. There are some dislikes that have their origin in the particular constitution of the individual: these are insuperable. Others again are only whims, and are not permanent, unless made so by having the attention forced to them. In the case of foods of first necessity, like bread, milk, and fruits, it would at least be necessary to overcome the distaste, without

letting the child know what you were doing and without thwarting him. This might be done, for example, by letting him get very hungry, and then, as though by chance, finding only the food to which he had a distaste. If the attempt did not succeed, I should not advise you to persevere in it. But if it is a question of the elaborate dishes that are used at the tables of the great, precautions might at first sight appear to be superfluous; for the chances are slight that the little fellow will ever find himself reduced for his entire nourishment, either in the woods or elsewhere, to ragouts of truffle or to chocolate dainties. But perhaps you have another object that you do not mention, which is really of importance. Your pupil is destined to take his place some day at the dinner tables of kings and princes. He must love all that they love and prefer all that they prefer. In everything, he must have their tastes: it is not the part of a good courtier to have tastes of his own. That and many other things should make you understand that it is not an Emile you have to educate. So be very careful not to be a Jean-Jacques; for that, as you see, does not make for a happy life.

Considerations on the Government of Poland (1773)

[The tractate entitled *Considerations on the Government of Poland and on the Reformation of it projected in April, 1772,* was written by Rousseau in response to the suggestion of Count de Wielhorski, a Polish count, who entertained the warmest admiration of Rousseau, and thought to get his countrymen to heed the wise words of a man so eminent. Rousseau felt much flattered by this appeal to him, and with the help of notes and memoirs supplied by the count, he set to work to draw up a new constitution for Poland. The result was a typically Eighteenth Century document, in which Rousseau appears at his best. The scheme he proposes for the regeneration of Poland is not wholly free from the element of fantasy, but taken as a whole it shows a sanity of judgment and a common-sense appreciation of political necessities scarcely to be expected from a dreamer like Rousseau. Before entering on the constitutional discussion in Chapters V–XV, Rousseau lays his foundations on ethical principles, and lays them well. More is needed, he points out, than external reforms in government. If Poland is to be saved, it can only be by the creation of an unconquerable national spirit. Retain the peculiar dress of the people, encourage every distinctive custom and institution, above all, educate the children into patriotism and good citizenship, and the permanent conquest of Poland will be impossible. The presentation of this view begins in Chapter II with a very characteristic glorification of the *Spirit of Ancient Institutions.* He recalls the supreme import-

ance of the legislator in the ancient world, and cites the extraordinary influence of Moses, of Lycurgus, and of Numa Pompilius in justification of his praise of the ancients. "The same spirit guided all the ancient legislators in their institutions. They all looked for ties to bind the citizens to their country and to each other, and they found them in distinctive usages—in religious ceremonies which by their nature were always exclusive and national; in games that did much to bring the citizens together; in exercises that increased at once their vigour and strength and their pride and self-esteem; in plays that appealed to them by recalling the history of their ancestors—their misfortunes, their virtues, their victories—provoked in them a lively emulation, and attached them firmly to the fatherland that was always in their thoughts." Chapters III and IV contain the application of this idea to the particular case of Poland in 1772. Poland, it should be added, never got the chance to consider Rousseau's scheme even if it had been so disposed. Rousseau's tractate was written in the spring of 1772. The first partition of Poland took place in the autumn of the same year.]

CHAPTER III.—APPLICATION

Poland is a great state surrounded by states still more considerable, which by their despotism and by their military discipline have a great offensive power. Enfeebled by her own anarchy, she is exposed to all their outrages in spite of the valour of her people. She has no strong places to stop their incursions. Her depopulation makes her almost absolutely defenceless. She is in financial chaos, has few or no troops, lacks military discipline, and is in a state of disorder. Always divided within, always menaced from without, she has no stability in herself and depends on the caprice of her neighbours. In the present state of matters, the only

method of giving her the stability she lacks, so far as I can see, is to infuse into the whole nation the spirit of the Confederates,[1] and so establish the republic in the hearts of the Poles that she will stand firm in spite of all the efforts of her oppressors. If you can bring it about that no Pole can ever become a Russian, then I can guarantee that Russia will never subjugate Poland.

It is the national institutions that form the genius, the character, the tastes, and the morale of a people, and make it different from every other people. By means of them is inspired that ardent love of country, based on ineradicable habits, that makes its citizens die of heart-weariness in foreign lands, even when surrounded by delights not to be found in their own land. Do you remember the Spartan, gorged with the luxuries of the great king's court, who was reproached because he longed for black sauce? "Ah," said he to the satrap with a sigh, "I know your pleasures, but you do not know ours."

To-day, there are no longer Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, or even Englishmen, whatever anyone may say. There are only Europeans. All have the same tastes, the same passions, the same moral attitude, because none of them has received a national form from distinctive institutions. In the same circumstances, they all do precisely the same things. They all call themselves disinterested, and play the rogue. They all talk of the public good, and think only of themselves. They all boast of their moderation, and long to be as rich as Crœsus. The one desire of their hearts is for luxury; their one passion is for gold. They would all sell themselves to the first man who was willing to pay them their price. What does it matter to them what master they obey, or under what laws they live? Provided they can get money to steal, and women to corrupt, they are at home in every country.

Give a different bent to the passions of the Poles, and you will give their souls a national physiognomy which

1 Those Polish patriots who had formed the Confederation of Bar in 1768 in the hope of shaking off the Russians.

will distinguish them from other peoples, and prevent them losing themselves in them or allying themselves with them. It is only such souls that can be affected by the legislation which is suitable for Poland. They will obey the laws without evasion, because the laws are agreeable to them and have the inner assent of their will. Loving their country, they will serve it with whole-hearted zeal. With this as the one sentiment, even bad legislation will make good citizens; and it is only good citizens that make the state strong and prosperous. . . .

CHAPTER IV.—EDUCATION

This is the all-important article. It is education that must give the souls of the people a national form, and so shape their opinions and their tastes that they become patriots as much by inclination and passion as by necessity. A child ought to look upon his fatherland as soon as his eyes open to the light, and should continue to do so till the day of his death. Every true patriot sucks in the love of country with his mother's milk. This love is his whole existence. He thinks of nothing but his country. He lives only for his country. Take him by himself, and he counts for nothing. If his country ceases to exist, so also does he. If not dead, he is worse than dead.

National education is the privilege of free men. Only free men have common interests and are really united by law. The Frenchman, the Englishman, the Spaniard, the Italian, the Russian, are all much the same: when any one of them leaves college, he is already trained for licence,—which is only another name for servitude. At twenty years of age, a Pole ought to be a Pole and nothing but a Pole. When he is learning to read, I want him to read about his own country. At ten, he should be acquainted with all its productions; and at twelve, with all its provinces, highways, and towns. At fifteen, he should know all its history; at sixteen, all its laws. There should not have been a fine action or an illustrious man in all Poland, whose fame does not fill heart

and memory, so that he can give instant account of them. From this it will be evident that it is not the ordinary studies, directed by foreigners and priests, that I want the children to pursue. The right ordering of the material, the sequence and the form of their studies, should be a matter for the law. Only Poles should be allowed to act as teachers; and these teachers should if possible all be married men, distinguished for character and probity as well as for good sense and intelligence, and destined at the end of a term of years for other occupations, not more important or more honourable (for that is not possible), but less arduous and of greater repute. Above all things, do not allow teaching to be made a profession. No public man in Poland should have any permanent position but that of a citizen. All the posts he fills, and especially important ones like this, should be considered simply as tests of fitness, stages by which he can mount higher after he has proved his worth. I would urge the Poles to pay special attention to this principle. I believe it to be the secret of a great strength in the state.

I do not like the distinction between colleges and academies, that leads to the rich nobles and the poor nobles being educated separately, and on different lines.[1] Since by the constitution of the state they are equal, they should be educated together, and in the same way; and even if it is impossible to establish a completely gratuitous system of public education, the fees in any case should be made so low that the poorest can pay them. It might even be possible to establish in each college a certain number of free places at the expense of the state, such as are called bursaries in France. If these places were given to the children of poor gentlemen who had deserved well of their country, they would become a mark of distinction on this ground, and might have a double advantage by no means negligible. To effect this, it is imperative that the nominations should not be arbitrary, but should be made by a kind of judg-

1 This seems to be a reference to some information about Polish education given to Rousseau by Count de Wielhorski.

ment, of which I shall speak hereafter. Those who filled these places would be called children of the state, and distinguished by some mark of honour that would give them precedence over other children of their own age, not excepting the children of the great.

In all the colleges there should be established a gymnasium or place of physical exercises for the children. The training of the body, though much neglected, is, in my opinion, the most important part of education, not only for making the children healthy and robust, but even more for the moral effect, which is generally neglected altogether, or sought by teaching the child a number of pedantic precepts that are only so many misspent words. I cannot repeat enough that a good education ought to be negative. If you keep the vices from springing up, you have done all that need be done for virtue. It is extremely easy to effect this in a good system of public education. The method is to keep the children always busy, not with troublesome lessons beyond their comprehension, which they hate, because (if for nothing else) they are compelled to remain in one place, but with exercises which give them pleasure by satisfying the needs of the growing body, and in other ways besides.

They should not be allowed to play separately at their own fancy, but made to play all together and in public, so that there may always be a common end to which they aspire, and by which they are moved to rivalry and emulation. Parents who prefer domestic education and want to have their children brought up under their own eyes, ought nevertheless to send them to these exercises. The instruction they get may be given at home and adapted to the individual, but their games should always be carried on in public and shared by all; for it is not simply a question of keeping the children busy, or of giving them a sturdy constitution and making them alert and graceful, but of accustoming them from an early age to discipline, to equality, to fraternity, to rivalry, to living under the eyes of their fellow-citizens and seeking public approbation. For this reason the prizes and rewards for the conquerors must not be dis-

tributed arbitrarily by the games masters or by the principals of the colleges, but be conferred with acclamation on the judgment of the spectators. These judgments, it may be reckoned, will always be just, especially if care is taken to render the games attractive to the public, by arranging them with a little ceremony and making a spectacle of them. If that is done, it may be assumed that all good people and all true patriots will make it a duty and a pleasure to lend assistance.

At Berne, a very singular training is given to the young patricians who are leaving college. It is what is called the External State. It is a copy in miniature of all that constitutes the government of the republic: a senate, chief magistrates, officers, ushers, advocates, lawsuits, judgments, ceremonies. The External State even does a little administrative work and has some revenues. This institution, authorized and protected by the supreme government, is the nursery for the statesmen who will one day direct the affairs of state in the same offices which in the first instance they occupy only in play.

Whatever form is given to this public education—into the details of which I do not enter here—it is advisable to establish a college of magistrates of the highest rank to have the supreme management of it. These would appoint, dismiss, and change at will all the principals and heads of colleges (who would themselves, as I have said, be candidates for the higher magisterial offices), as well as the games masters, who, like the others, must be stimulated to zeal and vigilance by the prospect of the better situations that will be opened or closed to them by the way in which they perform their duties. Since it is on these institutions that the hope of the republic and the glory and fate of the nation depend, I regard them, I must confess, as having an importance which, to my surprise, is nowhere assigned to them. I am distressed for humanity, that so many thoroughly practicable ideas that seem to me good and useful should have nothing like them in actual practice.

It will be noted that I have only given general indications here, but they will be enough for those to whom

I address myself. These imperfectly developed ideas of mine show in a dim way to the modern world the unknown roads by which the ancients brought men to a vigour of soul, a patriotic zeal, an esteem for the essentially personal qualities without regard to anything alien to humanity, which are no longer found among us, but which are fermenting in the hearts of all men, and only await suitable institutions to become active. If in this spirit you determine the education, the usages, the costumes, and the morals of the Poles, you will develop in them this ferment that as yet is kept inactive by corrupt maxims, by institutions that have outlived their day, and by a destructive egoistic philosophy. The nation will date its second birth from the terrible crisis out of which she is now emerging; and, seeing what it is that has made her members what they are, in spite of the lack of training, she will expect and get much more from a carefully thought-out system of education. She will cherish and respect the laws that flatter her noble pride, the laws that make and keep her free and happy. She will cast out of her heart the passions that set them at naught, and encourage those that cause them to be loved. In short, by renewing herself, she will acquire in this new age all the vigour of a young nation. But without these precautions expect nothing from your laws. However wise and foreseeing they may be, they will be evaded and prove of no effect. You will only have corrected some of the evils that do you harm, to introduce others you had not foreseen. These are the preliminary considerations which I regard as of prime importance. Let us now turn to the Constitution.

APPENDIX

Letter from Madame D'Epinay to Grimm containing an Account of a Conversation in which Rousseau expressed his Views on Education (1757)

. . . I do not know whether I am unjust to Rousseau when I say that he is more satisfied with the pleasure of maintaining extravagant views than pained at the consternation that his cleverly defended sophisms can create in the heart of his hearers. I had experience of this yesterday; he has really left me desolate in soul. I was conversing with him and with M. de Margency on the method that Linant[1] adopted with my son. We approved of one part of his method and condemned another. All at once it occurred to me to remark that it was a very difficult business to educate a child. That is quite true, replied Rousseau; seeing that nature has not made fathers and mothers to educate nor children to be educated.

This reply of his bewildered me. What do you mean? said I. Margency burst out laughing, and added what I had not dared to add. You have an educational plan of your own in your head, have you not? Indeed I have, he replied, in the same matter-of-fact tone; but it would be much better if children could do without education and I had not to make any plan. In the state of nature all that man is compelled to do is to make provision for his physical needs—and that he does under penalty of death by starvation; to defend himself against his enemies, which he does under penalty of being killed; and to produce his kind, a thing to which

1 The tutor of her son.

nature invites him without any parental lesson. So you see that the education of a savage takes place without anyone concerning himself about it. The basis of our education, on the other hand, is not in nature. It needs to be founded on social conventions, which are for the most part absurd and contradictory, at variance sometimes with the taste and character of the child, and sometimes with the views, the interests, and the social position of the father.

But after all, we are not savages, said I to him; for good or for evil, education is a necessity. How is it to be managed? It is certainly very difficult, he replied. I am aware of that, said I; that was the first thing I said to you, and here I am no further on than before. To make your work easier, replied Rousseau, it would be necessary to begin with a total reconstruction of society. Otherwise, if you seek the advantage of your child, you will constantly be in the predicament of prescribing to him in his youth a crowd of very wise maxims which he will have to abandon. Look frankly at all the people who have got on in the world. Do you think they have won success by conforming to the strict maxims of probity they got from their fathers? Though one dare not say to children that they must tell lies and break their word, it is perfectly certain that they will need to do so. That is the awkward thing about education. Experience shows all the advantage of these qualities. Just listen to a child a little more clear-headed than the rest. Suppose he urges on his father the rigorous observance of the rules he prescribes for him in some very important circumstances, as, for example, when it is a question of sacrificing his fortune for a friend, or helping the unfortunate. You will see this father bringing forward so many *ifs* and *buts,* so many modifications of his precepts, that the child will not know where to stop, and then the fine maxim comes to nothing. The fact is that it is useless to expect to get any good from education, unless when the individual interest is so bound up with the general interest that it is almost impossible to be vicious without being punished, and virtuous without

being rewarded; and unfortunately this is not to be found anywhere in the world.

Not even in your own country? queried Margency. Perhaps things are not quite so bad there as in other places, replied Rousseau; but, generally, wherever the education of a nation is bad, individual education cannot be good, and the whole of youth is spent learning things that need to be forgotten at a later age. The great talent of the ordinary education is to employ or to forget the maxims according to circumstances. But, said I to him, do you not believe that there is any advantage in being good, even in a corrupt society? Yes, he replied, but it is an advantage that can only be appreciated at the end of life. Ah, sir, said I to him in real anger, you forget that I am a mother, and make me despair with your philosophy. Madame, he added, in the same indifferent tone, you ask me for the truth. Your very vexation is a proof that I am telling it to you.

Chronological List of Rousseau's Writings on Education; including the more Important References in his Works and Correspondence

1736. Letter to his father (on his choice of a vocation).
1740. *Project for the Education of M. de Sainte-Marie.*
1749. Memoir for M. Dupin.
1750. *The Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts.*
(*a*) Women's education (Third Footnote in Part II). (*b*) Condemnation of the ordinary education with its immense establishments: comparison with Spartan education (middle of Part II).
1754. *The Discourse on the Origin of Inequality among Men.*

Inequality due to differences of education (Part I—near the end).

1755. The Article on *Political Economy* in the *Encyclopédie.*

1758. Letter to Dr. Tronchin: Nov. 27th (the public education of the citizens of Geneva).

1759. Letter to Madame de Créqui: Jan. 15th (asking for information about the education of her son).

1761. The Education of Julie's Children: *New Heloïse,* Part V Letter 3.

1762. The *Emile.*

1763. Letter to Monsignor de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris (a lengthy reply to the condemnation passed by him on the *Emile* in an episcopal charge).

1763-4. Correspondence with the Prince of Wirtemberg about the education of his infant daughter. The most important letters are those dated Nov. 20th (the Memoir translated here), Dec. 15th, Jan. 21st, Sept. 3rd.

1764. Letter to Madame de Roguin: March 31st (on the education of her infant child).

Letter to Philibert Cramer (the object of the *Emile*).

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